

## A1P (1) MAJOR HIGHWAY SCHEMES - A5225 WIGAN AND HINDLEY BYPASS

### Objections to Draft Deposit

Ref No	a	b	c	d	Name	Agent	Response Ref.
009	O	002	A	1P	Mr Alan Waterhouse		WMBC A5225 Foundry
010	O	001	A	1P	Mrs G Waterhouse		WMBC A5225 Foundry
028	O	001	A	1P	Kay and Darren Shaw		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
098	O	001	A	1P	Mr and Mrs A Arnott		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
145	O	001	A	1P	Mrs Olive M Harvey		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
151	O	001	A	1P	Mr & Mrs A Cloherly		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
153	O	001	A	1P	Mr B Scott		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
216	O	001	A	1P	Mr G T Goodall		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
217	O	001	A	1P	SWAN (Save Westhoughton Act		WMBC 217 A1P
232	O	001	A	1P	David Whalley		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
233	O	001	A	1P	Simon Bickerton		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
234	O	001	A	1P	Collin Roy Weaver		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
235	O	001	A	1P	William Dootson		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
236	O	001	A	1P	Peter Hardman		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
237	O	001	A	1P	Mr John Wood & Mrs Marie Wood		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
238	O	001	A	1P	William Wesley Hammond		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
241	O	001	A	1P	Fred Taylor		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
242	O	001	A	1P	Alice Haylett		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
243	O	001	A	1P	Mr H. Rowe		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
244	O	001	A	1P	Mrs B Worrall		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
245	O	001	A	1P	Mr James Marley		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
246	O	001	A	1P	Mr & Mrs Kelly		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
252	O	002	A	1P	Mark Harper		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
257	O	001	A	1P	Joan Waterworth		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
258	O	001	A	1P	Susan Loudon, Reg Holmes, Mark		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
259	O	001	A	1P	Brian and Susan Axon		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
260	O	001	A	1P	Derrick Atherton		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
261	O	001	A	1P	Susan Finch		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
262	O	001	A	1P	William Kerfoot		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
263	O	001	A	1P	Jacqueline Lewis		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
268	O	001	A	1P	Beverly Jackson		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
344	O	001	A	1P	Michael Forrest		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
348	O	001	A	1P	Mr Anthony Donald Hamer		WMBC A1P (1) 348
349	O	001	A	1P	Mr and Mrs Lawton		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
350	O	001	A	1P	Emma Pilworth		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
351	O	001	A	1P	Norman Hodkinson		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
352	O	001	A	1P	James Peter Gregory		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
353	O	001	A	1P	Lesley Hodkinson		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
354	O	001	A	1P	John Ellison		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
355	O	001	A	1P	Mr and Mrs Reed		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
356	O	001	A	1P	John Sumner		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
357	O	001	A	1P	Marian Jones		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane

358	O	001	A	1P	Kenneth Jones		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
359	O	001	A	1P	Mrs N Cave		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
360	O	001	A	1P	Harold Watson		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
361	O	001	A	1P	Mr R Birchall		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
362	O	001	A	1P	Mr G Hunt		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
363	O	001	A	1P	Margaret Warren		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
364	O	001	A	1P	Wouter Greven		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
365	O	001	A	1P	Elizabeth Smith		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
366	O	001	A	1P	Ethel Baxendale		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
367	O	001	A	1P	David Mills		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
368	O	001	A	1P	Mr and Mrs Hart		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
369	O	001	A	1P	Mr Peter Talbot		WMBC A1P (1) 348
370	O	001	A	1P	John Watson		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
371	O	001	A	1P	Kenneth Green		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
372	O	001	A	1P	Stanley Howard		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
373	O	001	A	1P	Mr Sydney Town		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
374	O	001	A	1P	Irene Eccles		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
375	O	001	A	1P	Mr Thomas Bate		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
376	O	001	A	1P	Mr and Mrs Tennant		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
377	O	001	A	1P	E Theckston		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
378	O	001	A	1P	Darren Simpson		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
379	O	001	A	1P	Andrew Glover		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
380	O	001	A	1P	Michael Talbot		WMBC A1P (1) 348
381	O	001	A	1P	Greater Manchester Bird Recording Group		WMBC 381 A1P (1)
383	O	001	A	1P	Neil Swann		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
384	O	001	A	1P	Phillip Woods		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
401	O	001	A	1P	Stuart and Gail Bradshaw		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
411	O	001	A	1P	Mr A J Bristow		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
412	O	001	A	1P	Mr and Mrs Ackers		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
414	O	001	A	1P	Gordon Pickard		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
415	O	001	A	1P	Bolton MBC		WMBC 415 A1P (1)
419	O	001	A	1P	Delmo Services Ltd		WMBC 419 A1P
420	O	002	A	1P	Mr and Mrs Houghton		WMBC A5225 Foundry
422	O	006	A	1P	Lancashire CPRE		WMBC 422 A1P (1)
426	O	001	A	1P	Mr and Mrs Tuck		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
427	O	001	A	1P	John Unsworth		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
428	O	001	A	1P	Thomas Rudd		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
430	O	001	A	1P	Rodney Norris		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
431	O	001	A	1P	Brian Sankey		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
443	O	001	A	1P	Adrian Jones		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
447	O	001	A	1P	Brian Storey		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
454	O	001	A	1P	Barbara Caren		WMBC A1P (1) 348
462	O	001	A	1P	Mr R Mellor		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
468	O	001	A	1P	Anthony Ashton		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
474	O	001	A	1P	Margaret Willis		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
475	O	001	A	1P	Darron Grundy		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane

478	O	001	A	1P	John Suddaby		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
481	O	001	A	1P	Matwell Copeland		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
489	O	001	A	1P	Harry Gordon Stewart		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
490	O	001	A	1P	Mr J Farrimond		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
491	O	001	A	1P	Jennifer Fishburn		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
492	O	001	A	1P	Margaret Procter		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
496	O	001	A	1P	Mr P Cleverly		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
501	O	001	A	1P	H & A M Dean		WMBC A1P (1) 348
502	O	001	A	1P	Mr Brian Adrian Lea		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
506	O	001	A	1P	D Jones		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
507	O	001	A	1P	M Dove		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
508	O	001	A	1P	Dennis and Jennifer Pritchard		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
509	O	001	A	1P	Mr and Mrs Coleman		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
510	O	001	A	1P	Steve Ralph		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
515	O	001	A	1P	Mr and Mrs Ainscough		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
521	O	001	A	1P	Mr and Mrs Scott		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
523	O	001	A	1P	David Poole		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
528	O	001	A	1P	Gary Crompton		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
529	O	001	A	1P	Mr E J Holt		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
542	O	001	A	1P	Sean Black		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
549	O	001	A	1P	Mr and Mrs Greenhalgh		WIGAN MBC 549/A
552	O	001	A	1P	Michael Parker		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
553	O	001	A	1P	Ellen May Clarke		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
554	O	001	A	1P	Edwin Heaton		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
555	O	001	A	1P	Mrs Dorathy Colbert		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
556	O	002	A	1P	Barry Stephen Evans		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
557	O	001	A	1P	Roy W Fox and Maureen Thompson		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
565	O	001	A	1P	Diane Forrest		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
583	O	021	A	1P	Peel Investments (North) Ltd	Halliwell Landau	WIGAN MBC 583/A
							WMBC 583 A1P (1) SUPP
584	O	003	A	1P	Miss H and Mr C Charles	Sedgwick Associates	WIGAN MBC 584/A
589	O	001	A	1P	Glenn Botham and Stephanie		WMBC A1P (1) 348
590	O	001	A	1P	John Vickers		WMBC 590 A1P (1)
593	O	008	A	1P	Mr C Andrews		WMBC 593
599	O	002	A	1P	Andrew Warland	Turley Associates	WMBC 599
600	O	001	A	1P	Clare Daly		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
602	O	001	A	1P	Kevin Fisher		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
679	O	001	A	1P	H J Banks and Company Ltd	Robert Turley Associates Ltd	WMBC 619 A1P
707	O	001	A	1P	Mrs D Chapman		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
708	O	001	A	1P	Mr and Mrs Jones		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
710	O	001	A	1P	Pam Wheal		WMBC 710 A1P (1)
712	O	001	A	1P	Howard Jones		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
713	O	001	A	1P	Campaign for Planning Sanity		WIGAN MBC 713/A

714	O	001	A	1P	L & H Unsworth		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
716	O	001	A	1P	Connie Jackson		WMBC A5225 Leigh Road
718	O	001	A	1P	Mr and Mrs Crossley		WMBC A5225 Lovers Lane
726	O	017	A	1P	United Utilities Facilities and Property Services		WMBC 726/A
727	O	020	A	1P	Greater Manchester Ecology Unit		WMBC 727 A1P (1)

#### Draft Deposit Objections Unconditionally Withdrawn

Ref No	a	b	c	d	Name	Agent	Response Ref.
382	O	001	A	1P	William Stowell		
558	O	001	A	1P	Geoffrey Leyland		

#### Objections to Revised Deposit

Ref No	a	b	c	d	Name	Agent	Response Ref.
233	O	002	A	1P	Simon and Zita Bickerton		WMBC A5225
736	O	001	A	1P	Arthur Penn		WMBC A5225
738	O	001	A	1P	M A Watmough		WMBC A5225
739	O	001	A	1P	Mr and Mrs D Smith		WMBC A5225
740	O	001	A	1P	Mrs W Lloyd		WMBC A5225
741	O	001	A	1P	Mr J A Whalley		WMBC A5225
742	O	001	A	1P	Mrs Elaine Prescott		WMBC A5225
743	O	001	A	1P	Mr E J Farrell		WMBC A5225
744	O	001	A	1P	Mavis Edwards		WMBC A5225
746	O	001	A	1P	Mr and Mrs Bailey		WMBC A5225
757	O	001	A	1P	Trevor Davies		WMBC A5225
758	O	001	A	1P	Sharon Heap		WMBC A5225
762	O	001	A	1P	Mr & Mrs S & S J Reynolds		WMBC A5225
763	O	001	A	1P	Mr George Lloyd		WMBC A5225
769	O	001	A	1P	Colin Walmsley		WMBC A5225
770	O	001	A	1P	Mr & Mrs G S Smith		WMBC A5225
775	O	001	A	1P	Mrs K L Haggarty		WMBC A5225
796	O	001	A	1P	Neville Collins		WMBC A5225
798	O	001	A	1P	Mr Gareth Collins		WMBC A5225
801	O	001	A	1P	David and Julie Ainscough		WMBC A5225
815	O	002	A	1P	Brian Acton		WIGAN MBC 815/A
816	O	001	A	1P	Mr R. H Cubells		WMBC A5225
817	O	001	A	1P	Mr James Ellis		WIGAN MBC 817/A
818	O	001	A	1P	Francis Mullen		WMBC A5225
819	O	001	A	1P	Mr G Green		WMBC A5225
820	O	001	A	1P	Mrs C. Price		WMBC A5225
821	O	001	A	1P	Mr G Barrett		WMBC A5225
822	O	001	A	1P	Mr. F Allen		WMBC A5225
823	O	001	A	1P	Mr A. Jukes		WMBC A5225
824	O	001	A	1P	Mr F. Toman		WMBC A5225
825	O	001	A	1P	Mr M Smalley		WMBC A5225
826	O	001	A	1P	Mr T Edwards		WMBC A5225

827	O	001	A	1P	Mrs M Spencer		WMBC A5225
848	O	001	A	1P	Mr and Mrs Hewitt		WMBC A5225
851	O	001	A	1P	Harold and Doreen Nield		WMBC A5225
852	O	001	A	1P	Peter and Eve Duffy		WMBC A5225
854	O	001	A	1P	Mr & Mrs Greenhalgh		WIGAN MBC 549/A
859	O	001	A	1P	Joan Caldwell		WMBC A5225
860	O	001	A	1P	Robert Johnson		WMBC A5225
861	O	001	A	1P	Mr S Harrington		WMBC A5225
862	O	01	A	1P	Stephen Hilton		WMBC A5225
863	O	001	A	1P	Gerald Bannister & Maureen Bannister		WMBC A5225
864	O	001	A	1P	A A Jardine		WMBC A5225
865	O	001	A	1P	Gerald Bilsbury		WMBC A5225
866	O	001	A	1P	Elaine Peet		WMBC A5225
867	O	001	A	1P	Majorie Johnson		WMBC A5225
868	O	001	A	1P	Mrs J P Trumble		WMBC A5225
869	O	001	A	1P	Mrs E Pollitt		WMBC A5225

#### Revised Deposit Objections Unconditionally Withdrawn

Ref No	a	b	c	d	Name	Agent	Response Ref.
B33	O	001	A	1P	Environment Agency		WMBC B33 A1IP

#### Supporters of Draft Deposit

Ref No	a	b	c	d	Name	Agent	Response Ref.
231	S	001	A	1P	Maurice Tyrer		
728	S	004	A	1P	Rebecca Jones		

#### Supporters of Revised Deposit

Ref No	a	b	c	d	Name	Agent	Response Ref.
555	S	002	A	1P	Mrs Dorothy Colbert		

#### Note

Objection 419/001 is dealt with in the section of this report which relates to policy A1P.

#### Main Issues

Whether this policy is appropriate, having regard to:

- the effect on the achievement of a sustainable pattern of settlement;
- the consideration of other options;
- the effect on the level of traffic on adjacent elements of the highway system;
- the effect on the environment;
- the prospects for the funding of the scheme;
- the likelihood that the scheme will commence during the plan period;
- the merits of related development opportunities.

## **Inspector's Considerations and Conclusions**

### *The effect on the achievement of a sustainable pattern of settlement*

10.64 Policy A1P(1) provides that the LPA will safeguard the land required for the A5225 Wigan and Hindley Bypass and will not permit any development which might prejudice its construction. The reasoned justification informs that this road is regarded by the LPA as a vital east-west link across the Borough. It is considered to be important for the future economic competitiveness of the plan area because it is critical to achieving the full potential of a number of significant employment sites. These include those at Pemberton Colliery, Westwood Park, Wigan Pier Quarter, East and West of Leigh Road, Gibfield and Parsonage. These, together, make up over 50% of the employment land allocated in the RDD. They have the potential to provide over 9,000 new jobs.

10.65 By removing congestion on the existing road network it is intended to ease access to a number of existing employment sites in the built-up areas of the Borough, promoting the creation of jobs where they are most needed. By removing unsuitable traffic from existing main roads it is intended to enable these routes to be more effectively used by the sustainable transport modes of bus, cycling and walking. When linked to the Westwood/Town Centre Link Road it would provide a direct route between Wigan Town Centre and the M6 motorway, replacing the present convoluted routes through densely built-up areas.

10.66 At FDD stage the reasoned justification referred to the possibility that the proposed road might be extended northwards across the area of the Borough of Bolton to the A6 road at Chequerbent. An objector argued that there was uncertainty over the intentions of Bolton Council in this respect. The LPA agrees that the reference in the reasoned justification was purely aspirational because it had no control over the implementation of the road in the area of another local authority. It deleted the reference to this at RDD stage.

10.67 PPS1 (paragraph 8) advises that certainty and predictability are key aspects of the plan-led system. PPG12 (paragraph 6.24) advises that, in preparing their development plans, LPAs should make adequate provision for development and infrastructure. However, it is important that the provisions made are realistic and are likely to be implemented in the period of the plan. Paragraph 6.25 advises that uncertainty of the likelihood of projects proceeding can lead to perceived blight to property owners in the vicinity. Paragraph 6.27 refers to the 1990 Act which requires LPAs to have regard to the likely availability of resources when preparing the general policies and proposals of UDPs.

10.68 Paragraphs 5.21 and 5.22 of that guidance note advise that UDPs should include transport proposals of a non-strategic nature as they relate to the development patterns proposed in the plan. The LPA regards the Wigan and Hindley Bypass as a non-strategic scheme intended to serve the development patterns which would emerge from its proposals to redevelop previously developed land in the urban area for employment in

conformity with national and regional planning guidance. Proposals should be limited to those on which work will commence during the lifetime of the plan, (in this case up to March 2016), especially where land is required to be safeguarded for the proposal. In safeguarding land, the LPA will need to be realistic about the prospects for the start of the project in the plan period and sensitive to the implications of blight.

10.69 PPG12 (paragraph 5.17) advises that plans should include an indication of the timescale and priorities for proposed transport developments. These should reflect the specific priorities and timescale set out in the Local Transport Plan (LTP). Authorities should, however, include only proposals which are firm with a reasonable degree of certainty of proceeding within the plan period. They should be identified as such in the LTP. Ideally they should be programmed and have finance committed. Objectors argue that the construction of a new road would, by providing additional highway capacity, promote the increased use of vehicles and thereby, constitute an unsustainable development. They argue that there is no realistic prospect that the scheme will commence during the plan period.

10.70 The safeguarding policy is intended to reserve land for the future construction of a 13km long new road which would link the M6 motorway (junction 26) with the A579 road at a point between Leigh and Atherton. At RDD stage various detailed changes were made to the FDD alignment, most notably at the eastern end where its intersection with the A579 was moved from the junction of Atherleigh Way and Lovers Lane to a point some 800m to the south of this. For much of its route the safeguarded land follows the alignment of an earlier proposed road which was intended to have linked the M6 (junction 26) with the M61 (junction 5). This latter scheme was originally promoted by Lancashire County Council as the Mid-Lancashire Motorway. In the early 1970s it was included in the Government's consultation paper for the National Primary Trunk Road Network. By 1974 it had been removed from the Government's List of Trunk Road Schemes, but its route was protected by the then extant Greater Manchester Council under town planning powers. Following a study by the Department of Transport the scheme was re-introduced into the National Trunk Road Programme in June 1985. The objective of that road was to provide a new route between the M6 and M61 to give Wigan, Hindley and Westhoughton efficient links to the motorway network.

10.71 The preferred route for this scheme was announced by the Secretary of State for Transport in May 1990. This allowed it to be protected for planning purposes in the currently adopted Wigan UDP. Various modifications to the route were made and a public inquiry held. In July 1996 the Secretary of State for the Environment and Transport confirmed acceptance of the Inspector's recommendation that the draft order be made. However, following the close of the inquiry the Department of Transport published a Review of the Trunk Road Programme which categorised the scheme as one for the longer term. In November 1996 the Department of Transport confirmed that the scheme was to be withdrawn from the longer term programme and that the route protection would cease as from 31 July 2002. From that date Wigan MBC took over the protection of the route.

10.72 The scheme for which land had been safeguarded was of a strategic nature. The road that had been envisaged up to that time was a high speed highway of dual carriageway standard throughout, with grade-separated junctions. It would have provided a major new east-west route linking north Merseyside with Greater Manchester, relieving the M62 and A58 roads. Objectors argue that, because this earlier scheme is no longer supported by Government, the current proposal has no chance of proceeding.

10.73 The scheme for which land is proposed to be safeguarded in RDD policy A1P(1) is, however, intended to serve a local role and provide a series of by-passes for individual settlements within Wigan Borough. It would be of dual-carriageway standard from the M6 to Westwood Park, with a dual-carriageway link to Wigan town centre. Eastwards from Westwood Park it would be of single carriageway standard. It would function as a by-pass for the local centres of Pemberton, Wigan, Ince and Hindley. The section of the road east of Westwood Park would have at-grade roundabout junctions controlled by traffic lights. The whole length of the road would be subject to a 50mph speed limit. The road would not effect a direct link between the M6 and the M61 motorways. The decision process in relation to the earlier scheme can, therefore, have little bearing on that for the route which is now proposed to be safeguarded.

10.74 The original scheme, now no longer to be pursued, is included in the current Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan 2001/02 to 2005/06. The scheme for which the RDD now proposes to safeguard the route is referred to in the Third Annual Progress Report of the Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan (July 2003) as a future major scheme for the period after 2006. In paragraph 2.116 this document confirms that the next LTP will bring forward further major scheme proposals which will be looking towards delivery during the next LTP period. One of these is the A5225 scheme to link the M6 to the A579 at Atherleigh Way near Leigh and Atherton.

10.75 The scheme is described as being intended to encourage the regeneration of areas of deprivation and improve public transport links into Wigan town centre and the proposed Wigan Transport Hub. It is intended that the construction of the new road would allow improvements to be made to road safety, bus priority and the environment for cyclists and pedestrians along existing congested roads such as the A577 through Wigan and Hindley. This scheme, and any others, will be the subject of the Greater Manchester Major Scheme Assessment Process before being included in any subsequent submission to Government for funding.

10.76 An Annex E submission was made through the Fourth Annual Progress Report of the LTP so that the Government could carry out a detailed appraisal of the scheme. The LPA confirmed its intention to submit a planning application for the scheme after the completion of the inquiry into the RDD.

10.77 RPG13 (policy T1) provides that transport issues in the region should be examined on a multi-modal basis to develop, where appropriate, sustainable and integrated solutions for all users in accordance with the priorities of the Spatial Development Framework. For Wigan this (policy SD1) requires that priority is given to

development which will enhance the overall quality of life. The supporting text to policy T1 recognises that it is now widely accepted that constructing new roads to accommodate future traffic growth is neither environmentally nor economically sustainable. The emphasis should, therefore, be on increasing the role of public transport, cycling and walking, together with making the best use of existing highway infrastructure.

10.78 PPS1 (paragraph 27) advises that, in preparing development plans, LPAs should ensure that new development is located where everyone can have access to services or facilities on foot, bicycle or public transport rather than having to rely on access by car. Planning should actively manage patterns of urban growth to make the fullest use of public transport and focus development in existing centres and near to major public transport interchanges.

10.79 PPG13 (paragraph 6) reinforces this advice. It emphasises, among other things, that when preparing development plans LPAs should protect routes that could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choices for both passenger and freight movement. Paragraph 19 advises that, in preparing their development plans, LPAs should give particular emphasis to accessibility in identifying the preferred areas and sites where jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services are located to ensure that they will offer realistic, safe and easy access by a range of transport modes and not exclusively by car.

10.80 RPG13 (paragraph 2.2) provides that the overall aim of regional planning guidance is to promote sustainable patterns of spatial development. This is to be delivered, among other things, through promoting economy in the use of land and adopting a sequential approach to meeting development needs to ensure that priority is given to reusing suitable previously-developed land. Policy DP1 amplifies this objective by providing that such land should be accessible by public transport, walking or cycling.

10.81 Wigan has, ever since the inception of the modern town planning system in 1947, not benefited from a fundamental restructuring of its strategic route network. The main east-west highway across the centre of the Borough is the A577. This is typical of the strategic route network in Wigan in that it passes through the built-up areas and the retail centres of settlements, fragmenting these and introducing noise, air pollution and traffic hazard. It carries both local and through traffic. Heavy goods vehicles share the same road surface with buses and cyclists. Due to the cramped layout of much of the older housing stock this traffic flow is, at many places, separated from the front elevations of dwellings by only the width of a narrow footway.

10.82 The LPA argues that the safeguarding of the route of the A5225 is a necessary prelude to the eventual development of a highway scheme which would actively promote a sustainable pattern of settlement, both through the unlocking for development of large areas of land for employment near to where potential employees live and also by removing unsuitable traffic from the existing road network, thereby significantly upgrading the quality of life for the many households which live near to it and providing the scope for the introduction of sustainable transport modes along it. The supporting text

to RDD policy A1P explicitly confirms that the safeguarding of the route of the A5225 scheme is promoted on that basis.

10.83 The employment areas to be served by the road, i.e. Wigan town centre and the major existing employment areas and proposed allocations, either already exist or are proposed in plans which conform to national and regional guidance, in particular the sequential approach to site identification set out in RPG13 policy DP1. No alternative sites exist for the proposed employment allocations on previously developed land within the built-up area. Any relocation of these as a consequence of the non-availability of the proposed road would require the use of green-field land and reduce the conformity of the RDD as a whole with national and regional guidance. A decision not to proceed with the employment allocations at all would not only render the RDD out of conformity with the key objectives of RPG13 but would also, by failing to provide sufficient employment land to meet forecast requirements, promote unsustainable longer distance journeys by Wigan residents to work outside the Borough.

10.84 The LPA seeks to diversify the local economy by attracting knowledge-based industries to the Borough. Objectors argue that, because the local population is unsuitable for this sort of work, the vacancies would be filled by employees from some distance away, thereby stimulating an unsustainable increase in travel to work distances. No evidence was presented to support the view that the characteristics of the local work force and of the typical knowledge-based employee were so distinctly different that this would, in practice, have the effect feared.

10.85 If employment development is to be successfully promoted in the sustainable locations selected by the LPA, and presented in the RDD, provision must be made for access to these sites and to Wigan town centre by heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) in a way which does not increase such traffic on the existing unsuitable road network. Public transport improvements, alone, would not secure this. It is necessary, in addition to enhance the scope of the existing road network to accommodate the sustainable transport modes of buses, cycling and walking. Traffic management measures must be introduced in accordance with RPG13 policy UR3. This requires that priority be given to the identification of locations where safety and environmental quality are key concerns. In my view the A577 corridor is clearly one of these.

10.86 That the construction of new roads has a role to play in transport policy is confirmed by the Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport (July 1998). This, in paragraph 3.126, confirms that traffic calming and measures to reduce traffic will be considered not only as an alternative to, but also in conjunction with, bypasses for towns and villages. The supporting text to RPG13 policy T1 (paragraph 10.3), in opposing the construction of new roads, makes this conditional on their being intended to accommodate future traffic growth. This is not necessarily the case in this instance because the new road would allow the introduction of traffic management measures on the existing road network along the A577 Corridor. These would limit its use to local traffic and public transport and enhance the provision made for cycling and walking.

10.87 RPG13 (policy T10) presents the regional priorities for transport investment. The scheme, for which land is proposed to be safeguarded, is not intended by the LPA to be of regional significance. Supporting paragraph 10.32 informs that schemes of local significance which accord with the policies and principles of the Regional Transport Strategy should be assessed on their individual merits. RPG13 (Appendix 2) presents the Regional Transport Strategy and confirms that this is composed of specified policies of RPG13.

10.88 I consider that, by promoting the development of previously developed land within the built-up area of Wigan, and by providing the scope for removing inappropriate vehicle movements from sensitive locations along the A577 Corridor, the scheme for which land is proposed to be safeguarded supports the achievement of the objectives of RPG13 policies DP1 (Economy in the Use of Land and Buildings); DP2 (Enhancing the Quality of Life); DP4 (Promoting Sustainable Economic Growth); EC1 (Strengthening the Regional Economy); EC2 (Manufacturing Industry); EC3 (Knowledge-based Industries); UR1 (Urban Renaissance) and UR3 (Promoting Social Inclusion). This latter policy makes a specific reference to upgrading the public transport network and the relationship of this to improvements in the road network. For this reason, and having regard to the supporting text of RPG13 (policy T10), I consider that the A5225 scheme should be assessed on its individual merits.

10.89 In the particular circumstances of Wigan I am satisfied that the desirable promotion of employment development on previously developed land within the built-up area, and the contribution this can make to urban renaissance, would be difficult to achieve without the construction of the A5225 road because the additional HGV traffic that this would generate would reduce, even more, the scope for access by sustainable modes to the preferred sites. It would also reduce it to many other existing sources of employment, services and retail facilities which are served by the existing road network.

10.90 By allowing the development of substantial areas of previously developed land for employment within short range of the potential workforce, by freeing up the existing road network for use by sustainable modes to gain access to these and all the existing employment, leisure and service destinations, and by allowing the scope for exclusion of unsuitable traffic from residential areas and the service centres of communities, I conclude that the scheme has the potential to make a significant contribution to the achievement of a sustainable pattern of settlement as sought by RPG13.

#### *The consideration of other options*

10.91 PPG13 (Annex C) advises that, in planning for local infrastructure including roads, LPAs should ensure that their approach is compatible with the New Approach to Appraisal (NATA). Particular emphasis should be given to the need to explore a full range of alternative solutions to problems, including solutions other than road enhancement. This approach is also a requirement of the Annex E submission under LTP procedures. RPG13 policy T1 requires that transport issues in the region should be

examined on a multi-modal basis to develop, where appropriate, sustainable and integrated solutions for all users in accordance with the spatial development framework.

10.92 PPG12, in respect of transport policies in development plans (paragraph 5.18), under the sub-heading of multi-modal approach, advises that, in taking key decisions about the location of development and related subsequent implications for transport requirements, LPAs should undertake a rigorous examination of alternative options that may be available. Such options may include making better use of the existing road network and demand management measures, traffic management, public transport improvements, alternative locations for the development which creates travel demand and the land-use implications of not proceeding with the proposal. The building of a new road is a further stated option, but, there should be a strong presumption against this unless all other options can be clearly shown to be impractical. There is no indication in this advice that it applies only to strategic schemes. I conclude, therefore, that it applies to local schemes such as this.

10.93 The LPA undertook an assessment of alternatives when it took over the scheme from the Highways Agency and then carried out a further review of highway alternatives and public transport options based on NATA. The alternatives considered were improvements to the existing highway network, various adjustments to the route of the proposed road and public transport-based options. This latter assessment included bus service enhancements, improvements to the existing rail network, the provision of a light rapid transport system to serve Wigan and the key employment sites, and also a guided bus-way.

10.94 The review of the alternatives was undertaken at a conceptual level. In this way any schemes that were clearly unfeasible were quickly discounted before detailed assessment work was undertaken. The LPA concluded that a purely public transport-based option would not meet all of the study objectives because, to achieve urban renaissance, it is necessary to open up a substantial number of employment sites for development. To be successful an option must, therefore, cater for the movement of goods as well as people. The LPA conceded, however, that due to the broad conceptual level at which it has so far carried out its assessment of alternatives, this cannot be regarded as the rigorous examination referred to in PPG12.

*The effect on the level of traffic on adjacent elements of the highway system*

10.95 The Greater Manchester Transportation Unit (GMTU) was commissioned by the LPA to develop a version of the Greater Manchester Sub-regional Highway Model for the assessment of the A5225 scheme. This model was used in conjunction with the Greater Manchester Strategic Planning Model (GMSPM) which is a combined land-use and transport interactive model which forecasts trip growth. Traffic forecasts have been developed for the base year (2001) and the assumed opening year (2011) and the design year of the scheme (2026).

10.96 If only the transport schemes which are already committed in Wigan are implemented (the do minimum scenario) traffic levels on the A577 corridor would rise by between 3% and 37% by 2011. By 2026 growth of between 11% and 97% is forecast. The implementation of the scheme would result in a reduction of traffic flows on all sections of the A577 to the extent that they would be below present levels in both 2011 and 2026. This reduction in traffic is intended to provide opportunities to improve accessibility by bus, cycling and walking along the existing A577 corridor.

10.97 Objectors note that a Transport Assessment has not been prepared and presented in evidence at the inquiry. PPG13 (paragraph 23) advises, however, that where developments will have significant transport implications, Transport Assessments should be prepared and submitted alongside the relevant planning applications for development. It is clear, therefore, that such an assessment is relevant to the planning application stage when the detail of the proposal will be considered, rather than to the safeguarding of land in a development plan.

10.98 RPG13 (paragraph 10.3) provides that constructing new roads to accommodate future traffic growth is neither environmentally nor economically sustainable. Objectors argue that the building of new roads is not the answer to problems of traffic growth and congestion. In particular, they contend that the construction of the Wigan and Hindley Bypass would significantly increase traffic levels on what are already congested sections of the existing road network at the eastern end of the Borough, particularly on the A579 road between Leigh and Atherton and on the network of existing roads that link this latter settlement to West Houghton and to the M61 motorway in the adjacent district of Bolton. They contend that this would happen with the alignments proposed at both FDD and RDD stages.

10.99 Quoting from the foreword to the document ‘The Future of Transport: A Network for 2030’ (published in July 2004) they assert that ‘we cannot simply build our way out of the problems we face with transport’. That document did, however, recognise the role of bypasses in tackling the worst areas of congestion.

10.100 The LPA argues that the proposal to safeguard land for the road is not intended simply to accommodate traffic growth. It is, instead, intimately connected with the proposed location of the employment sites which it is to serve. If these are to be located within or adjacent to the built-up area, in conformity with national and regional guidance, the traffic they generate will inevitably impact on the roads in their vicinity.

10.101 A proportion of that traffic, both HGVs and travel to work journeys by employees, would be influenced by origins and destinations at and beyond the eastern end of the Borough, regardless of whether the new road was built or not. The only way to avoid such an increase in traffic would be to not make the employment allocations themselves, or to concentrate the majority of them at the western end of the Borough. Given that the first key objective of RPG13 is to achieve greater economic competitiveness and growth, such allocations must clearly be made. Given the need to maximise accessibility to jobs while minimising the use of vehicular transport, a

distribution of sites throughout the Borough, as proposed in the RDD, is clearly necessary.

10.102 Concerns that the construction of the Wigan and Hindley Bypass would increase traffic on the existing highways which would link its eastern end to the M61 motorway are based on the assumption that new roads not only accommodate a redistribution of existing traffic but themselves, via their initial spare capacity, generate additional vehicular movements. In this case, however, the road is intended by the LPA to be part of a comprehensive approach to achieving urban renaissance. The provision of additional road space is intended to accommodate not only the extra HGV movements generated by the proposed new employment sites but also existing inappropriate traffic that does not need to pass through the various centres and residential areas along the A577 which would be diverted on to it.

10.103 This would allow roads in that latter corridor to be remodelled so that they could be restricted to local traffic with increased priority given to buses, cyclists and pedestrians. Instead of being a scheme intended to promote the enhanced use of the private car, as some objectors assert, it is one which has the potential to reduce its use by facilitating the enhancement of sustainable transport modes. The weight given to this argument is, however, somewhat reduced by the absence of detailed plans and programmes of traffic management on the existing road network to complement the new road itself. The policy, as presented in the RDD, is simply the safeguarding of land for a new road. The decision maker is asked to take on trust that complementary traffic management measures will follow. In my view it is this lack of a comprehensive approach to achieving a balanced sustainable transport solution to the problems of Wigan which generates misgivings among objectors.

10.104 Depending on the detailed measures to be introduced on the existing road system there might be scope for the overall east-west traffic levels in the broad zone between junction 26 of the M6 and junctions 4 and 5 of the M61 to remain substantially unchanged. The traffic generated by the new employment sites and by the reduction in journey time on the new road compared with the existing A577 might be offset by reduced car movements on the existing road network as sustainable modes of transport become more attractive and better used. That has not, however, been demonstrated by the LPA.

10.105 An objector argues that the construction of the A5225 would disrupt the present direct route for vehicles between Foundry Lane, Wigan, and the nearby Enfield Street. The Proposals Map simply shows the area of land to be safeguarded for the construction of the road. There is nothing either on the Proposals Map or in the written text of the RDD to indicate the detailed impact of the proposed road on this particular element of the existing local highway network.

*The effect on the environment*

10.106 PPG12 (paragraph 4.4) advises that development plans should be drawn up in such a way as to take environmental considerations comprehensively and consistently into account. Paragraph 5.21 advises that if detailed consideration of a scheme at a public inquiry was to reveal that it would cause unacceptable damage to the environment, consideration could be given to its deletion or relocation. PPG9 (paragraph 26) advises that authorities should take account of nature conservation considerations in assessing sites for any development proposals in the plan.

10.107 Objectors argue that the LPA has not presented to the inquiry sufficient information on environmental impact to enable a reasoned recommendation to be made on a safeguarding policy. They refer to Sites of Biological Importance, Local Nature Reserves, woodlands, water bodies, wildlife corridors and public footpaths, including sections of the greenway network, which would be crossed or potentially disrupted by construction of the road. Some of these areas contain the habitats of protected species including the Great Crested Newt. They argue that the LPA has not undertaken and presented to the inquiry an Environmental Impact Assessment which would evaluate the effect of the scheme on these matters. Others express concern that the proposed new road would generate noise, visual intrusion, vibration and air pollution which would unacceptably detract from the amenity of their homes and reduce their value. Some suggest detailed changes to the route of the road which, they contend, would reduce its impact on particular properties.

10.108 The LPA refers to Circular 02/99: 'Environmental Impact Assessment' (paragraph 9) which advises that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) must be carried out for certain types of project before they can be given 'development consent'. Having regard to the content of that Circular it is likely that an EIA would be required for the Wigan and Hindley Bypass. Paragraph 15 of that Circular confirms that the term 'development consent' refers to the decision on the relevant planning application. It is not, therefore, a necessary pre-requisite for consideration at development plan stage.

10.109 Paragraph 13 of that Circular, in any case, confirms that where the EIA procedure reveals that a project will have an adverse impact on the environment it does not follow that planning permission must be refused. It remains the task of the LPA to judge each planning application on its merits within the context of the development plan, taking account of all material considerations including the environmental impact.

10.110 In respect of nature conservation this advice is reinforced by PPG9 (paragraph 27) that nature conservation can be a significant material consideration in determining planning applications. LPAs should not, however, refuse planning permission if development can be subject to conditions that will prevent damaging impacts on wildlife habitats or important physical features or if other material factors are sufficient to override nature conservation considerations. Paragraph 47 of that guidance advises that this approach applies also to the consideration of proposals which would be likely to result in harm to protected species or their habitats.

10.111 The LPA confirms that it is, in any case, preparing its mitigation measures for the road on the principle that the population of protected species should be maintained within their natural range. Before such species can be disturbed a licence must be issued by DEFRA (on the basis of advice by English Nature). To obtain this it is necessary for the LPA to demonstrate that it has followed this approach. The licensing system provides another element of protection at planning application stage.

10.112 PPG9 (paragraph 24) does advise, however, that nature conservation issues should be included in surveys of local authority areas required by sections 11 and 30 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to ensure that development plans are based on fully adequate information about local species and habitats. It is, therefore, not sufficient for consideration of these matters to be postponed to a later stage. The absence of detailed information on the impact of the scheme on nature conservation interests is a factor which reduces confidence that the route which is proposed to be safeguarded is, in detail, the appropriate one. Objectors note that in the RDD the LPA is seeking to safeguard a very specific area of land for the construction of the road. I concur with their view that, in advance of the publication of the EIA and the formulation of detailed mitigation measures, it is not possible to be certain that the necessary mitigation of its effects can be achieved within the safeguarded area.

10.113 In respect of the effect of the scheme on public rights of way, the Council has, as DINC 8, proposed an additional policy (C1X) to protect the integrity of the network (refer to the section of this report which relates to policy EV3A). In respect of the effect on residential amenity and road safety these matters can be assessed only when the design of the road is finalised. Insufficient information is available at RDD stage of the UDP preparation process to enable me to comment on the potential effects of the road on the amenities of the occupiers of particular dwellings.

10.114 Objectors draw attention to the fact that the land to be safeguarded lies, in part, within the green belt. PPG2 (paragraph 3.12) advises that the statutory definition of development includes engineering operations. These are inappropriate development within the green belt unless they maintain openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in the green belt. Such an assessment can be made only when the design of the road is known. In any case, even if the scheme was considered to be one of inappropriate development, it would be necessary to consider whether the harm by reason of inappropriateness (and any other harm) was clearly outweighed by other considerations and, therefore, whether very special circumstances exist to justify the scheme. Location of the road within the green belt is not, therefore, an in-principle barrier to the safeguarding of land for its construction.

#### *The prospects for the funding of the scheme*

10.115 The current cost of the scheme is estimated to be some £113 million. Only a small proportion of this, some £15 million, was committed at the time of the inquiry. Objectors argue that the proposal is not firm or programmed and that it does not have

finance committed. The LPA identified several potential sources of funding. These are the Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan (LTP); North West Development Agency (NWDA) funding; agreements with private developers; the National Coalfields Programme (NCP); the Private Finance Initiative (PFI); sales of Council owned land and the Council's own capital programme.

10.116 During 2004 the LPA submitted a bid for LTP Major Scheme funding for 2005/06 to support the construction of the road. The result of this was announced on 2 December 2004 by the Government Office for the North West (GONW). The decision letter confirms that GONW recognises the many benefits of the scheme in helping to tackle congestion, improve access to and around Wigan and promote economic development and regeneration within the Borough. Even when these are taken into account, however, GONW confirms that Ministers have decided that the scheme does not represent sufficient priority for approval at this stage. The LPA argues that it had not anticipated LTP funding until 2008/09. There is, however, having regard to national and regional policy guidance, no indication at all that the present low priority to be afforded to highway schemes will be subject to fundamental change in the foreseeable future.

10.117 In support of its argument that NWDA funding might be forthcoming, the LPA refers to a letter of 23/10/03 from that body. This, however, goes no further than noting the special importance of particular sites in Wigan as strategic opportunities for encouraging the development of knowledge-based industries. It gives no encouragement to the view that funding will be forthcoming for the road scheme.

10.118 The LPA (in its core proof for the A5225 road) expresses the hope that the development of the Primary Employment Area at the East of Leigh Road (EM1A13) could, potentially, fund the construction of the section of the A5225 between Atherleigh Way and Leigh Road. However, a detailed submission made by the LPA to the planning consultant GVA Grimley confirms that the private sector will not bring that site forward because the remediation and abnormal costs associated with that land makes development uneconomical. The possibility that development may fund this section of the road is predicated on the development of a substantial proportion of site EM1A13 for housing. Because this is contrary to the policies of the RDD, little weight can be attached to this prospect.

10.119 There is, therefore, no basis for an assumption that the development of site EM1A13 could assist the funding of the A5225 road. Even if the development prospects of that site did allow for the funding of that particular section its construction, independent of the remainder of the scheme, could not be relied upon because, as the LPA concedes, no transport modelling has been undertaken of the effects of implementing individual road sections in isolation.

10.120 Correspondence with the National Coalfields Programme did not express any commitment to funding. The scheme is, at present, listed in the Private Finance Initiative spending review allocation but is at too early a stage for such funding to be contemplated. To satisfy the Treasury guidelines there would have to be an extant

planning permission and a confirmed compulsory purchase order in place. The LPA is committed to funding the preparation costs of the road itself. Sales of Council-owned land do have the potential to generate substantial sums which could be used for this purpose. The extent of this is, however, a matter of speculation. The Council's capital programme could also make a substantial contribution but would, inevitably, be the subject of competing demands arising across the whole range of local government services. I conclude that there is no realistic prospect that the A5225 road will be funded so as to enable a start of construction within the plan period.

*The likelihood that the scheme will commence within the plan period*

10.121 The LPA, at the inquiry, expressed its intention to submit a planning application for the construction of the road, as a whole, in December 2004. It would make a decision on this and refer the application to the ODPM in July 2005. A subsequent inquiry would, it believes, probably be concluded in June 2006 and the decision arising from this would be issued in April 2007. A further LTP submission would be made in July of that year. If approved in December 2007, funding would be available at April 2008. Compulsory Purchase Orders and Side Road Orders would be made in December 2007. The Compulsory Purchase Order inquiry would be held in May 2008 leading to a decision in December 2008. Tenders would be issued in October 2008 and accepted in February 2009. This would allow construction to commence in April 2009 and be completed in October 2011. The LPA estimates that this timetable could be reduced by about two years if there are no outstanding objections to be resolved by the various inquiries. This is, however, an unlikely scenario.

10.122 The LPA assumes that it will make a decision on the planning application in July 2005. This is based on the assumption that a planning application would be submitted during December 2004. However, at mid-January 2005, the LPA confirmed that such an application had not yet been submitted and that it could not indicate when that might occur. The decision of GONW on the LTP bid (2/12/04) referred to the need for additional traffic modelling work to be done. This would have to be completed before a Transport Assessment could be finalised and used to support a planning application. At January 2005 the LPA confirmed that its traffic modelling work was continuing but gave no indication when it might be concluded.

10.123 In any case the starting point for a decision on the planning application will be the development plan. Given the advanced stage reached in the preparation of the replacement UDP, the content of this report will be an important material consideration which might well delay such a decision. Indeed, given the advice of the companion document to PPS1 (The Planning System: General Principles, paragraph 17), it is likely to be the case that the proposed road scheme would be considered to be so substantial, and its effect on other land uses so significant, that to grant planning permission for it in advance of this report would prejudice the outcome of the plan process by pre-determining decisions about the scale, location or phasing of new development that ought properly to be taken in the development plan context.

10.124 The LPA timetable allows only a small gap between the assumed date of the decision on the planning application (following an inquiry) and the further application for LTP funding. A small amount of slippage could generate significant delays in the LTP application. A further factor which could contribute to delay is the tendering process. The LPA anticipates that it would issue tenders in October 2008, some two months before the anticipated date of the decision on the CPO inquiry. Given the importance of that decision to the project as a whole, it is unlikely that those tendering would be willing to undertake the necessary detailed work until after that decision was known. The tender acceptance date would, in all probability, be deferred by some months.

10.125 The LPA's timetable for delivery of the scheme relies on numerous assumptions, of which those relating to funding are the most uncertain. Given my consideration in the preceding sub-section of this report, I conclude that there is no realistic prospect that a start on this project could be achieved within the plan period. Having regard to the advice of PPG12 (paragraph 5.17) land should not be safeguarded for this scheme.

10.126 I note the evidence of the LPA that, at present, it owns over 70% of the land needed to build the road and is continuing to acquire land by negotiation. It believes that over 95% of the necessary land will be in its ownership before the beginning of the compulsory purchase process. If the LPA does, eventually, succeed in assembling the necessary funding and statutory consents to enable it to construct the road, the absence of a safeguarding policy need not, therefore, in practice, present an insuperable obstacle to the eventual achievement of the scheme because of the limited scope for conflicting development to stand in the way of land assembly.

*The merits of related development opportunities*

10.127 An objector argues that the UDP has not recognised particular development opportunities that would arise from the construction of the A5225 road. He advocates that land at Forshaw's Tip, to the south of Hindley, should be included in the list of sites identified in policy EV1A in respect of which the Council, in conjunction with other parties, will secure reclamation and renewal. He argues that this tip is a prominent feature within the local landscape and has a detrimental effect on the character of its surroundings. He proposes that it should be reclaimed by a high quality residential development which could proceed with or without the construction of the A5225 road. This would contribute to the achievement of the national and local targets for the re-use of previously developed land for housing, resolve contamination issues, provide resources to upgrade local recreational facilities (including a local park and sports pitches) and support the creation of a recreational footpath/cycleway.

10.128 The LPA confirms that policy EV1A does not refer to all derelict land sites but only those which, in its view, have the highest priority for reclamation and renewal. It has had regard to the resources available for site restoration and considers that the natural regeneration of Forshaw's Tip, by re-vegetation and tree growth, reduces its

priority compared with other sites such as the nearby Grammar Pit. No policy in the UDP would prevent the reclamation of this site if this was intended by the owner, notwithstanding its omission from the list in policy EV1A.

10.129 For the reasons I give in the section of this report which relates to policy R1A I have concluded that there is sufficient land available from sites with planning permission, the residential element of mixed-use allocations and the reasonable expectation of windfall sites coming forward on previously developed land within the defined urban area to meet housing development needs during the plan period. PPG3 (paragraph 30) advises that LPAs should seek to identify only sufficient land to meet housing requirements set out in RPG. They do not need to consider all the land in their area and should not extend the search further than required to provide sufficient capacity to meet the agreed housing requirement. There is, therefore, no justification for identifying this land as part of the housing land resource during the period up to 2016. Having regard to the development potential identified by the objector it is appropriate that this land continue to be designated as safeguarded land under policy GB2 so that its suitability for development may be assessed at the next plan review. Because the reclamation of this land would rely on its residential development there is no prospect of its reclamation within the plan period. There is no justification therefore for a reference to this site within policy EV1A.

10.130 An objector argues that land at Dangerous Corner, Hindley Green, should be identified for residential development. Having regard to my assessment of the housing land supply, to which I refer above, there is no quantitative justification for such an allocation. This is a green-field site. Having regard to the advice of PPG3 it should, even as a potential urban extension, be afforded a relatively low priority for such development.

10.131 Land to the south of Heathlea and Aylesbury Crescent, Hindley Green, is proposed by the same objector to be designated for roadside services associated with the A5225 road. For the reasons I give elsewhere in this section of the report I have concluded that land should not be safeguarded for the construction of this. An allocation of land for roadside services would, therefore, be inappropriate.

10.132 Land to the south of Radnor Close, Brecon Drive and Edgeworth Road, Hindley, is proposed by this objector for residential development with related leisure and local facilities. Having regard to my assessment of the housing land supply, to which I refer above, there is no quantitative justification for such a housing allocation. There is no indication that the related leisure and local facilities could be viable in the absence of this. The objector argues that the development of this area would help to fund the construction of the A5225 scheme. Having regard to the extent of estimated costs, and the limited commitment so far to funding, I conclude that the financial contribution of this and the other sites referred to by the objector is unlikely to be a significant factor. This area should, therefore, continue to be designated as safeguarded land so that its potential for development can be considered at the next plan review.

10.133 The objector proposes that land to the south of the proposed A5225 road, and to the immediate north and west of Primary Employment Area EM1A14, should be designated for a mixed-use development which would reinforce the Primary Employment Area with complementary industrial/commercial uses. Even if the A5225 road was constructed, this area would be accessible only via the EM1A14 designation. There is no indication that the owner of that land would support such a scheme. Identification of that site would be contrary to the advice of PPG12 (paragraph 6.24) that the provisions of development plans should be realistic and likely to be implemented during the plan period. If such a proposal did arise, UDP policy EM1C would provide the context for the LPA's decision. There is no need, therefore, for a specific allocation of this land.

10.134 The objector contends that an area of land to the north, south and west of Forshaw's Tip should be safeguarded for residential development beyond the plan period. This area is identified on the UDP proposals map as safeguarded land, thereby allowing its potential for development to be assessed at a future plan review. Having regard to the advice of PPG3 (paragraph 30) it would not be appropriate to extend any greater commitment to the development of this area.

10.135 The objector notes that much of the land to which his objections refer is proposed to be designated as safeguarded land under policy GB2. He argues that, because safeguarded land is not within the green belt, it is wrong for the LPA to treat it (via policy GB2) as if it was. I deal with this matter in the section of this report which relates to policy GB2. He also expresses concern that no guidance is given by the RDD on the types, quantum or timescale of its development. PPG2 (Annex B, paragraph B2) advises that safeguarded land is that which may be required to serve development needs well beyond the plan period. Since it is not the role of the RDD to provide a policy framework for the period beyond 2016, it is to be expected that the UDP would present no guidance on these matters.

## **Recommendation**

### **I recommend:**

**(REC 10.18) that the RDD be modified by the deletion of the provisions for the safeguarding of land for the construction of the A5225 Wigan and Hindley Bypass.**

**(REC 10.19) that no other modification be made to the RDD in response to these objections.**

## A1P (2A) WESTWOOD PARK LINK ROAD

### Objections to Draft Deposit

Ref No	a	b	c	d	Name	Agent	Response Ref.
419	O	002	A	1P	Delmo Services Ltd		WMBC 419 A1P

### Objections to Revised Deposit

Ref No	a	b	c	d	Name	Agent	Response Ref.
419	O	004	A	1P	Delmo Services Ltd		WMBC 419 A1P

### Main Issue

Whether this policy is appropriate, having regard to the effect of the scheme on the safe and free flow of traffic.

### Inspector's Considerations and Conclusions

10.136 The Westwood Park Link Road is the first phase of the road scheme which will link the Wigan town centre with Westwood Park and the proposed A5225 Wigan and Hindley Bypass. An objector argues that the detailed design of this road would disrupt activities at his site, because vehicles entering and leaving would be restricted to a left turn and there would be increased congestion of the local highway network. He suggests detailed changes to the layout of the proposed road.

10.137 This objection relates to a level of detail which is inappropriate to the development plan stage. It is a matter for consideration when a detailed scheme is formulated and submitted for planning permission. This process has already been undertaken and the relevant planning application was approved in September 2002. A Compulsory Purchase Order to support the implementation of the scheme was confirmed in September 2004. This objection has, therefore, been overtaken by events. In respect of the objector's specific concerns a Transport Assessment undertaken to support the relevant planning application confirmed that the highway network will operate satisfactorily when the scheme is implemented.

### Recommendation

**I recommend:**

**(REC 10.20) that no modification be made to the RDD in response to these objections.**

## A1P (4) ASHTON-IN-MAKERFIELD NORTHERN BYPASS

### Objections to Draft Deposit

Ref No	a	b	c	d	Name	Agent	Response Ref.
155	O	002	A	1P	Dr John Holden		WMBC 155 A1P (4)
457	O	008	A	1P	Highways Agency		WMBC 457/727 A1P
727	O	021	A	1P	Greater Manchester Ecology Unit		WMBC 457/727 A1P

### Draft Deposit Objections Unconditionally Withdrawn

Ref No	a	b	c	d	Name	Agent	Response Ref.
424	O	021	A	1P	Phil Lally		

### Objections to Revised Deposit

Ref No	a	b	c	d	Name	Agent	Response Ref.
727	O	034	A	1P	Greater Manchester Ecology Unit		WMBC 457/727 A1P
747	O	093	A	1P	Wigan Borough Action Group		WIGAN MBC 747/A

### Note

Objection 155/002 relates to policy A1P(1) and is dealt with in that section of this report.

### Main Issues

Whether this policy is appropriate, having regard to:

- the prospects that the policy will achieve its stated objectives;
- the implications for the trunk road network;
- the prospects for land assembly and securing the necessary financial resources.

### Inspector's Considerations and Conclusions

*The prospects that the policy will achieve its stated objectives*

10.138 The RDD proposes that the Council will safeguard the land required for the Ashton-in-Makerfield Northern Bypass (ANB) and will not permit any development which might prejudice its construction. The reasoned justification informs that the scheme is intended to provide a link from junction 25 of the M6 to the South Lancashire Industrial Estate and onwards to the A58. It would relieve industrial and through-traffic from a large part of Ashton. In addition the reasoned justification of the RDD expresses the intention of advocating to the Highways Agency that junction 25 be made an 'all ways' junction. At present junction 25 caters for traffic movements only from and to the south on the M6.

10.139 The ANB is referred to in the adopted UDP as a scheme for which the Council will investigate feasibility and, in respect of which, it will not permit

development which might prejudice its construction. The route shown on the proposals map of the adopted UDP approximates to, while not exactly coinciding with, that on the proposals map of the RDD.

10.140 In the section of this report which relates to policy A1P(1) I refer to the national and regional planning guidance which provides the framework for decision making. In particular the provisions made in development plans for safeguarding transport routes should be realistic about the prospects for a start during the plan period and be sensitive to the implications of blight.

10.141 The LPA's arguments in respect of the impact of the ANB on the existing highway network are limited to the single generalised assertion that 'the construction of the road is going to relieve Ashton town centre of some traffic'. Objectors draw my attention, however, to a study carried out by the Greater Manchester Transport Unit (GMTU) in 1995 (CD42) to create and validate a traffic model for Ashton-in-Makerfield to assess various traffic relief proposals for the town centre. Among the options considered was the construction of the ANB along an alignment exactly as presented on the RDD proposals map.

10.142 The study noted that the centre of Ashton-in-Makerfield lies at the junction of the busy A49 and A58 roads, both of which carry high proportions of through traffic. Approximately 10% of traffic on these roads consists of goods vehicles of 1.5 tonnes un-laden weight and above. This compares with the Greater Manchester average of 5.5%. In addition a number of main junctions in the town centre are of sub-standard geometry. Consequently they suffer from congestion, particularly in the peak periods. The report of the study commented that the problems caused by heavy vehicular flows and the high percentage of HGVs were particularly severe on Gerrard Street, the main shopping street, where pedestrians suffer noise, pollution, severance and danger. At the inquiry the LPA conceded that no action had been taken since the time of the study which would have relieved the problem to any appreciable extent.

10.143 Upon testing the proposed ANB, even with traffic restraint measures in the town centre, it was found that it simply diverted traffic from the B5207 Bryn Road. This road runs parallel to the proposed bypass from the A58 in the south to the A49 in the north, where it joins that latter highway at a point a little over 1km to the south of where the proposed bypass would join it. Traffic flows through the town centre fell by very little. The study concluded that the construction of the ANB was the most expensive of the options considered and that it failed to achieve any of the objectives of the study. It expressed the view that the construction of a scheme of this magnitude and expense could not be justified, given the lack of relief from through-traffic which would be experienced in the town centre. At the inquiry the LPA confirmed that it accepted the conclusions of this report.

10.144 The reasons for the lack of traffic relief in the town centre lie in the layout of junctions 24 and 25 of the M6 motorway which, respectively, lie to the south west and north west of the town. The slip road layout at junction 24 allows access only to traffic to

or from the north. That at junction 25 allows this only to traffic to or from the south. The nearest all-ways junction with the M6 is junction 23 to the south of Ashton-in-Makerfield, where the A49 road from the town centre meets both the M6 and the A580 dual-carriageway. In the absence of the ANB, traffic to and from the town as a whole (including the South Lancashire Industrial Estate which lies to the east of this) and the south along the M6 travels along the A49 through the town centre to and from junction 23. The construction of the bypass would not alter this pattern because it would provide a significantly more lengthy journey via junction 25 which lies to the north of the town.

10.145 In the absence of the ANB, traffic to and from the town as a whole (including the South Lancashire Industrial Estate) and the north along the M6 travels through the town centre along the A58 road to and from junction 24. The construction of the bypass would not alter this pattern because it would link to junction 25. To use it, traffic to and from the north would make a double journey along the M6 between junctions 24 and 25. This is the basic problem which is reflected in the conclusions of the GMTU study.

10.146 The problem could be partially resolved if M6 junction 25 was converted to an all-ways junction. This would enable the ANB to provide an alternative route for traffic to and from the north on the M6 without the need to traverse the town centre. It would still, however, not reduce the level of traffic to and from the south via the M6 junction 23 which uses the town centre because that would remain the more direct route. The same situation would pertain if, instead of using a converted junction 25, traffic to and from the north via the M6 eventually used the A49 and the A5225 road to join that motorway. In any case, notwithstanding the LPA's advocacy to the Highways Agency, no evidence was presented to the inquiry to support any expectation that the Highways Agency will upgrade junction 25 during the lifetime of the emerging UDP.

10.147 I conclude, on the basis of the only technical evidence produced to the inquiry on this matter, that the proposed ANB would not achieve, to any tangible extent, the purposes for it which are stated in the reasoned justification for the policy i.e. that it would relieve industrial and through-traffic from a large part of Ashton. There can, therefore, be no justification for regarding this scheme as a potential solution to the identified problem.

#### *The implications for the trunk road network*

10.148 An objector argues that the proposed road has the potential to have a detrimental impact on the capacity, safety and efficiency of the trunk road network, but these impacts do not appear to have been satisfactorily addressed. A planning application will be required for the road and this must be accompanied by a Transport Assessment in accordance with the advice of PPG13 and policy A1A of the RDD. The reasoned justification for policy A1A, at RDD stage, confirms that the coverage and detail of the Transport Assessment should reflect the scale and likely impacts of the development proposed, including any implications for the trunk road network. This procedure will

secure that the concerns of the objector are addressed before any approval is given to a particular scheme of road construction.

*The prospects for land assembly and securing the necessary financial resources.*

10.149 The LPA contends that the southern part of the bypass, between the A58 and the Wigan to Kirkby railway line, would be constructed as part of the development of land which is allocated for employment in the RDD (policy EM1A36). The northern part, between that railway line and the A49, would cost some £4.8 million. No specific resources have currently been identified for this but the LPA considers that this could be provided from within the Council's own Capital Programme which is, at present, some £71 million. The Council has no current intention to seek LTP funding for the bypass, but has not ruled this out as a possibility. Given the conclusion of the GMTU study, that the ANB is the most expensive of the options considered and that it fails to achieve any of its objectives, the prospects for public sector funding must be poor.

10.150 The LPA argues that the south eastern half of the route is either already wholly owned by the Council or is being acquired by a development company which will bring forward part of the road as part of a development of land allocated for employment at the South Lancashire Industrial Estate. This would leave a 1.4km section to be acquired. The majority of this is said, by the LPA, to be in the hands of a local landowner who supports the scheme. No direct evidence of the intentions of these third parties was presented to the inquiry. In any case it is clear that, to complete the scheme, additional land beyond that referred to must be acquired.

10.151 A fundamental criterion for the confirmation of compulsory purchase orders is that this is necessary in the public interest. On the basis of the only technical evidence presented to the inquiry on this matter it is clear that the only stated public interest, i.e. the relief of a large part of Ashton from industrial through-traffic, would not be, to any tangible extent, achieved by the particular scheme put forward for safeguarding. By simply transferring traffic from the B5207 Bryn Road to the ANB it would leave the situation within Ashton town centre substantially unchanged.

10.152 This consideration reduces the confidence which can be attached to the prospect that necessary additional sections of the route could be acquired by compulsory purchase. It also, for the same reason, reduces the confidence that funding from public sources, including not only the LTP but also the Council's own Capital Programme, will be forthcoming because it would be difficult to justify this if it could not be demonstrated that the public interest was to be served.

10.153 The proposed extension to the South Lancashire Industrial Estate would increase its area very substantially. It would certainly increase the level of traffic generated, the extent of this depending on the nature of the new activities to be located there. Given the extent of the problems of congestion, noise, pollution, severance and danger caused by the existing through traffic in Ashton town centre, it is reasonable to assume that the additional employment development at the South Lancashire Industrial

Estate must be severely restricted until such time as a viable means of substantially reducing through traffic is devised for this area or a Transport Assessment submitted with a planning application within allocation EM1A36, demonstrates that the particular scheme would not unacceptably increase that harm. That has not happened yet and it is clear that the sole proposal, the ANB, is not on its own the answer. It is, therefore, reasonable to conclude that employment development at the South Lancashire Industrial Estate must be severely restricted in terms of type and/or amount until a solution is found. This casts doubt on whether the likely scale of development there could, during the plan period, generate the developer-led funding that the LPA relies on to secure the southern part of the ANB.

10.154 My confidence that the proposed bypass could be progressed through its various statutory procedures is further reduced by lack of consistency within the LPA as to its primary purpose. The RDD (policy A1P) describes it as a major highway scheme which is intended to relieve industrial and through-traffic from a large part of Ashton. The Council's witness statement (WMBC/583/C) in paragraph 6.1, (in seeking to minimise the weight to be given to problems arising from the pattern of traffic flows imposed by M6 junctions 24 and 25) argues, to the contrary, that the ANB is seen primarily as a development road designed to secure maximum value from the extension of the South Lancashire Industrial Estate, and to assist the upgrading of the existing estate. The LPA at the inquiry did not, furthermore, present evidence, technical or otherwise, to support the argument that the construction of the ANB was the only means by which vehicular access could be provided to the additional areas of land allocated for employment under policy EM1A36.

10.155 Objectors express concern that the area of land to be safeguarded is not presented on the proposals map. The reasoned justification in relation to the ANB confirms that the line of the road is presently being defined. At the inquiry the LPA confirmed that this definition exercise had not yet been completed and that the precise land-take is not known. It referred to the advice of PPG12 (paragraph 5.22) that, where the precise route is not known but where proposals are sufficiently advanced, the authority may define on the proposals map the areas over which it intends to apply a safeguarding policy. In this case the LPA has not shown an area of land on the proposals map but has simply illustrated the general route of the proposed road with a narrow line. This can be interpreted only as confirmation that the proposals are not sufficiently advanced to allow definition of the precise route. Because it does not confirm the area of land within which planning permission will be refused for conflicting development, the RDD does not provide the certainty and predictability which PPS1 (paragraph 8) advises are an essential aspect of the plan-led system. The provision made in the RDD and its proposals map would not, therefore, serve the fundamental purpose of a safeguarding policy.

10.156 For the above reasons there is no basis on which I can conclude that the construction of the ANB is an appropriate response to either the present traffic problems of Ashton town centre or to the unlocking of land for employment development. Considerable uncertainty attends the area to be safeguarded from conflicting development

and also the prospects for land acquisition and scheme funding. I conclude, therefore, that there is no realistic prospect that the scheme will commence during the plan period. For this reason land should not be safeguarded for this particular road scheme.

### **Recommendation**

#### **I recommend:**

**(REC 10.21) that the RDD be modified by the removal of the references to the safeguarding of land for the Ashton-in-Makerfield Northern Bypass.**

**(REC 10.22) that no other modification be made to the RDD in response to these objections.**

## A1R HIGHWAY ACCESS - NEW DEVELOPMENT

### Objections to Draft Deposit

Ref No	a	b	c	d	Name	Agent	Response Ref.
457	O	009	A	1R	Highways Agency		WMBC 457
572	O	029	A	1R	Peter Sargeant FRTPI		WIGAN MBC 572/A

### Objections to Revised Deposit

Ref No	a	B	c	d	Name	Agent	Response Ref.
457	O	016	A	1R	Highways Agency		WMBC 457
747	O	112	A	1R	Wigan Borough Action Group		WIGAN MBC 747/A

### Main Issues

Whether this policy is appropriate, having regard to:

- the protection of the trunk road network;
- action prior to the submission of a planning application;
- the relative priority to be afforded to wheelchair users.

### Inspector's Considerations and Conclusions

#### *The protection of the trunk road network*

10.157 Policy A1R requires new development to facilitate safe and convenient access for all road vehicles in a way which is compatible with the hierarchy of accessibility and good urban design. An objector, at FDD stage, argues that policy A1R does not provide adequate protection for the safe and efficient operation of the trunk road network. At RDD stage the LPA has inserted in the reasoned justification a paragraph which informs that direct access on to the trunk road network will be restricted and developers will need to contact the Highways Agency at an early stage about any development that may directly or indirectly affect a trunk road. Such early contact will enable the Highways Agency to inform the prospective developer of the stringent restrictions on access which apply in such situations and of the implications, for the particular scheme, of DTLR Circular 04/2001.

10.158 The same objector, at RDD stage, contends that this text still leaves it unclear when the Highways Agency should be consulted and what roads are actually trunk roads. The LPA has no formal standing in relation to emerging schemes of development until a planning application has been submitted. Once that happens the established procedures for consultation will be applied. It is for that reason that, in its reasoned justification to policy A1R, the LPA is restricted to advising that developers should contact the Highways Agency at an early stage and omits reference to a particular time-table.

10.159 At present the trunk roads in the Borough are limited to the M6 and M58 motorways but, until recently, the trunk road network included the A580 road. There may, conceivably, be other changes in the definition of the network during the plan period to 2016. It is, therefore, appropriate to make a generalised reference to the trunk road network in the UDP rather than to specify its current components.

10.160 The objector contends that, within the reasoned justification, the reference should be to the ‘trunk road network’ rather than to a ‘trunk road’. This preferred term is used at RDD stage in the first line of the second paragraph of the reasoned justification to policy A1R.

*Action prior to the submission of a planning application*

10.161 The reasoned justification for this policy advises prospective developers to contact the Highways Agency at an early stage about any development that may directly or indirectly affect a trunk road. An objector argues that the UDP should require developers to seek and obtain the approval of the Highways Agency to any such scheme before they submit a planning application to the LPA. The submission and processing of planning applications are governed by regulations approved by Parliament. The Borough Council has no remit to modify these or to dictate changes to the decision processes of other statutory bodies.

*The relative priority to be afforded to wheelchair users*

10.162 Policy A1R provides that development proposals should, among other things, ensure that roads, pavements, footpaths and cycle-ways are designed and integrated into development so as to give priority to pedestrians, wheelchair users and cyclists and to promote community safety. An objector argues that, within this part of the policy, the reference to wheelchair users should come before pedestrians. This is not necessary, however, because the general initial wording of this policy secures that access to new development must be provided in a way which is compatible with the hierarchy of accessibility which is presented in policy A1.

**Recommendation**

**I recommend:**

**(REC 10.23) that no modification be made to the RDD in response to these objections.**

## A1S PARKING IN NEW DEVELOPMENT

### Objections to Draft Deposit

Ref No	a	b	c	d	Name	Agent	Response Ref.
418	O	018	A	1S	GMPTE		WMBC A1S
572	O	030	A	1S	Peter Sargeant FRTPI		WIGAN MBC 572/A
572	O	031	A	1S	Peter Sargeant FRTPI		WIGAN MBC 572/A
702	O	014	A	1S	Tescos Stores Ltd	The Development Planning Partnership	WMBC A1S
728	O	005	A	1S	Lancashire County Council		WMBC A1S

### Draft Deposit Objections Unconditionally Withdrawn

Ref No	a	b	c	d	Name	Agent	Response Ref.
424	O	022	A	1S	Phil Lally		

### Objections to Revised Deposit

Ref No	a	b	c	d	Name	Agent	Response Ref.
572	O	118	A	1S	Peter Sargeant FRTPI		WIGAN MBC 572/A
581	O	013	A	1S	Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust	Michael Courcier and Partners Ltd	WMBC 581/A
582	O	010	A	1S	Taylor Woodrow Developments Limited	Michael Courcier and Partners Ltd	WMBC 582/A
747	O	039	A	1S	Wigan Borough Action Group		WIGAN MBC 747/A

### Main Issues

Whether this policy is appropriate, having regard to:

- the basis for the UDP parking standards;
- the encouragement of reduced parking provision;
- the relevance of maximum parking standards;
- the scope for the provision of car parking below maximum standards;
- the structure and content of Appendix 9;
- car parking standards for dwelling houses;
- the appropriate parking standards for Stadia;
- grammatical aspects.

### Inspector's Considerations and Conclusions

#### *The basis for the UDP parking standards*

10.163 Policy A1S relates to parking provision in new development. An objector argues that the UDP should base its parking standards on those in PPG13 in preference to those in RPG13. This would allow more car parking in particular circumstances, notably

at food stores, where car parks could be used by town and district centre shoppers, thereby facilitating linked trips.

10.164 Under the terms of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, RPG13 has become the Interim Regional Spatial Strategy. It is, therefore, part of the development plan for each relevant LPA area and has the full weight of s38(6). For this reason, and because it is addressed more closely to local circumstances, it should be given more weight than the advice of PPG13. PPG13 itself (paragraph 53) advises that Regional Planning Bodies and LPAs may adopt more rigorous standards than those set out in PPG13 (annex D) where this is appropriate.

10.165 PPG13 (paragraph 54) advises that, for individual developments, car parking provision above maximum standards may be permitted where the need for this has been demonstrated through a Transport Assessment. This is reflected in the second paragraph of the reasoned justification to policy A1S. An objector contends that the reasoned justification text is an over-generalised version of the advice of PPG13 (paragraph 54) but, in my view, it is a fair representation of it. An objector argues that the UDP should provide guidance on how a Transport Assessment would demonstrate the requirement for extra parking and how this would be linked to Travel Plans and other initiatives to promote modal shift. In my view it is sufficient for the RDD to require that a Transport Assessment be used to demonstrate why parking in excess of the maximum standards is needed. The detailed measures to be employed in the assessment will vary from one scheme to another and are best determined at development control stage.

*The encouragement of reduced parking provision*

10.166 An objector argues that the UDP should encourage reduced parking provision in areas well served by public transport or existing parking spaces. It should consider the use of shared car parking in appropriate circumstances. The second element of policy A1S does this. It provides that the scope for providing car parking below the maximum standard will be considered against the factors of accessibility of the site by public transport and the availability of off-street and on-street parking spaces. These latter categories of car parking are of a type which would be likely to be shared.

*The relevance of maximum parking standards*

10.167 An objector notes the reference to maximum car parking standards in both policy A1S and Appendix 9. He argues that, as a general principle, these should be replaced with minimum standards. The references to maximum parking standards are, however, soundly based on the advice of PPG13 (paragraph 52) that policies in development plans should set maximum levels of parking for broad classes of development.

*The scope for the provision of car parking below maximum standards*

10.168 The second part of policy A1S provides that the scope for providing car parking below maximum standards will be considered against specified factors. An objector argues that it is not appropriate to prevent such development and that the application of the criteria may inhibit the creation of parking-free developments. He contends that it would be difficult to apply the criteria in practice because no indication of their relative weight is given.

10.169 PPG13 (paragraph 51) advises that LPAs should not require developers to provide more spaces than they themselves wish, other than in exceptional circumstances. The factors referred to by the LPA are the accessibility of a site by public transport, the availability of convenient and safe off-street parking, the availability of on-street car parking without detriment to residential amenity and highway safety and the feasibility of providing on-site parking relative to other planning issues such as the re-use of a constrained site or building and urban design. The provision of insufficient car parking as part of a new development has, in certain circumstances, the potential to cause demonstrable harm to the safe and free flow of traffic. In my view it is essential to take account of the factors listed in the second part of policy A1S if this is to be avoided. They, therefore, represent the exceptional circumstances anticipated by PPG13. As regards the relative weight of the stated factors, it is established practice that, in the determination of planning applications, a range of different considerations must be weighed against one another in accordance with the approach of s38(6). It would be inconsistent to require the relative weight of the factors in policy A1S to be prescribed in advance of a particular decision when this is not required for the other factors which contribute to planning decisions generally.

*The structure and content of Appendix 9*

10.170 Appendix 9 of the RDD presents parking standards and is to be read in conjunction with policy A1S. An objector argues that it should be re-structured to reflect the hierarchy of users which is set out in policy A1. The plan is intended to be read as a whole. No particular benefit in comprehension would arise from such a reorganisation. The same objector contends that the interpretive comments at policy R1D should appear in Appendix 9 to aid understanding. I deal with this matter in the section of this report which relates to policy R1D.

*Car parking standards for dwelling houses*

10.171 Objectors refer to the parking standards for dwelling houses (class C3) which are presented in Appendix 9 of the RDD. They argue that these do not accord with the advice of PPG3. That guidance note (paragraphs 59 to 62) advises that car parking standards for housing should not be expressed as minimum standards. Those in the RDD, policy A1S and Appendix 9, comply with this advice in relation to housing, being expressed as maximum standards. PPG3 advises that parking policies should be framed with good design in mind, recognising that car ownership varies with income, age,

household type, the type of housing and its location. Objectors argue that the LPA has failed to do this. These factors are, in practice, difficult to reflect in a policy because the LPA has no control over the identity of the individuals and households who occupy particular dwellings. PPG3 recognises this by limiting its provisions to the advice that LPAs should allow for significantly lower levels of off-street parking provision, particularly for developments in locations such as town centres where services are readily available by walking, cycling or public transport, or which provide housing for elderly people, single people and students where demand for car parking is likely to be less than for family housing. The UDP standards do conform to this advice by providing for less car parking space in town centre developments than in out-of-centre ones, and for single bed and sheltered accommodation as compared with larger dwellings.

10.172 PPG3 advises that car parking standards that result, on average, in development with more than 1.5 off-street car parking spaces per dwelling are unlikely to reflect the Government's emphasis on securing sustainable environments. Policies which would result in higher levels of off-street parking, especially in urban areas, should not be adopted. A subsequent Ministerial Statement has clarified that PPG3 envisages that the average of 1.5 car spaces is to be taken over the whole of an LPAs area. Objectors argue that this does not necessarily mean that developments above this average will harm this objective. The RDD standards reflect that view by providing that, for dwelling houses with 4 or more bedrooms, 2 car spaces would be appropriate.

10.173 There is no basis for a conclusion that the maximum standards provided for dwelling houses, i.e. 1 per 3 dwellings for sheltered housing; 1 per dwelling for single bed dwellings and flats in town centres and dwelling houses of up to 3 bedrooms; 1.5 per dwelling for 2 + bedroom flats outside town centres and 2 per dwelling for 4 + bedroom dwellings would result in this overall average of 1.5 off-street spaces per dwelling being exceeded within new housing developments across the LPA area as a whole. Objectors argue that additional provision should be made for visitors' car parking spaces. My interpretation of the advice of PPG3 is that this is to be provided within the overall average of 1.5 off-street car spaces per dwelling. I conclude that the LPA's car parking standards are in conformity with the advice of PPG3.

10.174 Objectors regard the prescription of rigid standards as inappropriate in principle. They note that the reference within PPG3 to 1.5 off-street car parking spaces per dwelling is expressed as an average. It is necessary, however, for the LPA to prescribe specific standards for particular categories of housing development to achieve this average. LPAs are advised to revise their parking standards to allow for significantly lower levels of off-street parking provision than in the past. It is still necessary, therefore, for the LPA to define clear standards of some sort.

10.175 Objectors argue that it is illogical for the standards to require a maximum of 1.5 car spaces per 2+ bedroom flat outside a town centre but a maximum of only 1 car space per 3-bedroom dwelling. The explanatory text to Appendix 9 informs that the parking standards are based on Greater Manchester-wide standards developed in partnership with the Greater Manchester districts through the Local Transport Plan

process. PPG13 (annex D) advises that, for land uses not covered by its standards (such as housing), the most stringent regional or local standards should apply. The specific disparity between the standard for 2+ bedroom flats and 3-bedroom dwellings is accounted for by the consideration that, within a development containing a number of flats where communal parking areas are provided, it is possible to apply an average figure such as 1.5 spaces per dwelling, but for individual dwellings the car spaces must be based on whole numbers.

10.176 The LPA clarifies that, for dwelling houses, it does not count a garage within a residential curtilage as a car space because many people use these for storage. This approach provides occupiers with a degree of choice as to how they use the space around their dwelling, allowing an increase up to 2 on-site car spaces if this is needed in the particular case. This approach would still, having regard to the range of dwelling types, allow the overall average of 1.5 car spaces per dwelling to be not exceeded. In the interests of clarity, however, this important aspect of the application of standards should be referred to in the UDP.

#### *The appropriate parking standards for stadia*

10.177 An objector considers that the parking standards for stadia, as presented in Appendix 9, are unreasonably low. The reasoned justification to policy A1S informs, however, that it is possible for a developer to provide parking in excess of the maximum standards if this is justified by a Transport Assessment. The UDP, therefore, provides the flexibility to respond to exceptional circumstances in respect of parking provision.

#### *Grammatical aspects*

10.178 The second element of the policy presents various factors to which regard is to be had when deciding whether it is acceptable to depart from stated parking standards. An objector proposes changes to the wording of criterion (iii) which would replace 'without' with 'whose use would not cause' and the word 'and' with 'or'. These would not materially improve its comprehension. Within the second paragraph of the reasoned justification the word 'sets' should be modified to 'set' in order to secure consistency with the plural term 'criteria'.

### **Recommendation**

#### **I recommend:**

**(REC 10.24) that the RDD be modified to secure that the explanatory text to Appendix 9 clarifies that the LPA does not regard garages within a residential curtilage as an off-street parking space for the purposes of applying the maximum car parking standards.**

**(REC 10.25) that the RDD be modified by the deletion of the word ‘sets’ in the second sentence of the second paragraph of the reasoned justification and its replacement with the word ‘set’.**

**(REC 10.26) that no other modification be made to the RDD in response to these objections.**

## A1T PARK AND RIDE

### Objections to Draft Deposit

Ref No	a	b	c	d	Name	Agent	Response Ref.
682	O	016	A	1T	English Nature		WMBC 682/A

### Draft Deposit Objections Unconditionally Withdrawn

Ref No	a	b	c	d	Name	Agent	Response Ref.
418	O	19	A	1T	GMPTE		
424	O	23	A	1T	Government Office for the North West		

### Objections to Revised Deposit

Ref No	a	b	c	d	Name	Agent	Response Ref.
572	O	102	A	1T	Peter Sargeant FRTPI		WIGAN MBC 572/A
682	O	035	A	1T	English Nature		WMBC 682/A
747	O	111	A	1T	Wigan Borough Action Group		WIGAN MBC 747/A

### Supporters of Revised Deposit

Ref No	a	b	c	d	Name	Agent	Response Ref.
747	S	002	A	1T	Wigan Borough Action Group		

## Main Issues

Whether this policy is appropriate, having regard to:

- the effect on nature conservation;
- the reference to detailed assessment of the proposal;
- grammatical aspects.

## Inspector's Considerations and Conclusions

### *The effect on nature conservation*

10.179 RDD policy A1T provides that applications for park and ride facilities will be permitted subject to stated criteria. An objector argues that the policy should be strengthened to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on protected species and biodiversity value. The UDP is to be read as a whole, however, in conformity with the advice of PPG12 that development plans should be succinct. The protection of species is secured by policy EV2D. Biodiversity is protected by policies EV2, EV2A, EV2B, EV2C and EV2E.

*The reference to detailed assessment of the proposal*

10.180 At FDD stage the reasoned justification for policy A1T required a detailed assessment of any proposals for park and ride schemes. This was deleted at RDD stage. An objector argues that this should be reinstated, but that would be superfluous given the reference to this matter within the body of the policy itself at criterion (b). The reasoned justification informs that proposals for park and ride schemes should accord with the Greater Manchester Park and Ride Strategy. The same objector argues that the word 'should' should be replaced with 'shall'. The word 'should' is however, the correct tense.

*Grammatical aspects*

10.181 An objector argues that the second paragraph of the reasoned justification requires some editing. In my view the RDD version of this text is perfectly comprehensible.

**Recommendation**

**I recommend:**

**(REC 10.27) that no modification be made to the RDD in response to these objections.**

## ACCESSIBILITY POLICY OMISSION

### Objections to Draft Deposit

Ref No	a	b	c	d	Name	Agent	Response Ref.
021	O	001	OM		Rotary Ltd		WMBC 021 OM
093	O	001	OM		General Aviation Awareness Council		WMBC 093 OM
394	O	002	OM		Crankwood, Abram and Lowton Bridleways		WMBC 394 OM
395	O	001	OM		Leigh, Atherton, Astley and Tyldesley		WMBC 395 OM
418	O	026	OM		GMPTE		WMBC 418 OM

### Main Issues

Whether the chapter of the RDD which relates to accessibility is appropriate, having regard to:

- the omission of a policy relating to the provision of heliports;
- the need to safeguard former railway lines for potential future communication routes;
- the interests of horse riders.

### Inspector's Considerations and Conclusions

#### *The omission of a policy relating to the provision of heliports*

10.182 Objectors argue that the UDP should contain a policy/proposal to promote the development of heliports. These would, the objectors contend, enable more rapid communication with Manchester Airport and other important centres and transport hubs. They would be of significant benefit to the local business community and would broaden the scope for recreational activity. For these reasons such a facility would support economic regeneration and provide necessary social infrastructure. PPG13 (annex B, paragraph 5) advises that LPAs will need to consider the role of small airfields in serving businesses, recreational, training and emergency services needs.

10.183 The LPA acknowledges the potential benefits of such a development. It included such a policy in the currently adopted UDP, but since its adoption date of 1996 no proposals for such a development have been forthcoming. There is no basis, therefore, for a conclusion that such a development is likely during the period of the replacement UDP. If a planning application was submitted for a heliport the provisions of policies G1A(a), A1, A1A and A1B would provide the basis for its determination. For these reasons I conclude that a specific policy is not required to either promote the provision of heliports or to form the basis for the determination of related planning applications.

#### *The need to safeguard former railway lines for potential future communication routes*

10.184 An objector argues that disused railway lines in the Borough should be safeguarded from development which would prejudice their future use as transport routes.

The LPA concurs and has considered the need for this. It has identified the role of disused railway lines in accommodating its proposals for part of the A5225 Wigan and Hindley Bypass, part of the Ashton Northern Bypass, the route of the Leigh Guided Busway and part of the Greenway network under policy C1E.

10.185 PPG12 (paragraph 5.22) advises that, in safeguarding land from development in order to retain it for a potential transport route, LPAs should be realistic about the prospects for a start of the project within the plan period and sensitive to the implications of blight. No information has been presented to me, either by the LPA or objectors, to indicate that there is a realistic prospect of such a transport scheme being promoted, let alone started, on any other section of disused railway line within the plan period. There is, therefore, no basis on which I can recommend safeguarding such land from competing development.

*The interests of horse riders*

10.186 Objectors at FDD stage argue that the UDP should recognise horse riders as legitimate and vulnerable road users. The LPA concurs and, at RDD stage, makes specific reference to horse riders within the hierarchy of accessibility presented in policy A1. The recognition that they are vulnerable road users is expressed in an addition to the reasoned justification to that policy at RDD stage. Objectors advocate that the needs of equestrians should be considered in the Local Transport Plan and the Road Safety Strategy. My remit extends only to the merits of the replacement UDP, however.

**Recommendation**

**I recommend:**

**(REC 10.28) that no modification be made to the RDD in response to these objections.**