



**Wigan**♥  
**Council**

Initial Draft Wigan Borough Local Plan  
Draft Duty to Cooperate Statement  
of Common Ground

April 2025

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This draft Duty to Cooperate Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared to support the Initial Draft Wigan Borough Local Plan. It summarises the position with regards to the Duty to Cooperate as at April 2025.
- 1.2 Wigan Council is working collaboratively with neighbouring authorities, statutory consultees and other key stakeholders on the preparation of the Local Plan. The Duty to Cooperate process is ongoing and this draft SoCG will be further updated prior to consultation on the Publication version of the Local Plan, scheduled for January 2026.

## **2. The Duty to Cooperate process**

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that local planning authorities are under a duty to cooperate with each other, and with other prescribed bodies, on strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries. Collaboration is required to identify the relevant strategic matters which need to be addressed in plans. Joint working should help to determine where additional infrastructure is necessary, and whether development needs that cannot be met wholly within a particular plan area could be met elsewhere.
- 2.2 The NPPF states that in order to demonstrate effective and ongoing joint working, one or more SoCG should be maintained, documenting the cross-boundary matters being addressed and progress in cooperating to address these. These should be produced using the approach set out in national planning guidance and be made publicly available throughout the plan-making process to provide transparency.
- 2.3 The plan-making section of Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) states that a SoCG is a written record of the progress made during the process of planning for strategic cross-boundary matters. Therefore, it should focus on strategic matters, rather than seeking to consider every cross-boundary impact.
- 2.4 A SoCG is expected to outline the geographical area covered, the key strategic matters it addresses, the authorities responsible for joint working and any additional signatories, and the governance arrangements for the cooperation process. It should include a record of where agreements have (or have not) been reached on key strategic matters. The level of cooperation detailed in the SoCG is expected to be proportionate to the matters being addressed.

### **3. Administrative area covered by the statement**

- 3.1 Wigan Borough is located on the western edge of Greater Manchester (GM). It is part of the GM City-Region and a member of the GM Combined Authority (GMCA). Within GM its neighbouring authorities are Bolton Council and Salford City Council.
- 3.2 Outside of GM, the borough's neighbouring authorities are:
- Warrington Borough Council
  - St Helens Borough Council
  - West Lancashire Borough Council
  - Chorley Council
  - Lancashire County Council.
- 3.3 St Helens Borough Council is part of the Liverpool City-Region, which has a Combined Authority that brings together the region's 6 local authorities. The Lancashire Combined County Authority was formed in 2025 and is the result of a partnership between Lancashire County Council, Blackburn with Darwen Council and Blackpool Council. Consultation took place from February – April 2025 on establishing a Mayoral Combined Authority across Warrington, Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester.
- 3.4 This draft SOCG relates to the local authority area of Wigan Borough, which is the area covered by the Local Plan.

### **4. Strategic context**

- 4.1 The Local Plan is a core plan for the council and a key means of helping deliver on our Progress with Unity missions. Consultation on the Initial Draft Local Plan is the third main consultation stage in its preparation, following the Issues and Opportunities consultation in Autumn 2022, and the Options and Preferences consultation in Autumn 2023.
- 4.2 Upon adoption, the Local Plan will replace the remaining policies in the adopted Wigan Local Plan Core Strategy and the Wigan Replacement Unitary Development Plan. Those two plans will then cease to exist.
- 4.3 The Local Plan will then form a key component of the borough's development plan alongside the Places for Everyone Plan (2024), the GM Joint Waste Plan (2012), GM Joint Minerals Plan (2013) and Neighbourhood Plans for Abram (2025), Golborne and Lowton West (2023) and Standish (2019).

## **The Places for Everyone (PfE) Plan**

- 4.4 The Places for Everyone (PfE) Plan is a joint strategic plan that covers Wigan Borough and 8 other GM districts. The Local Plan will be a 'Part 2 plan' to the adopted PfE Plan.
- 4.5 The PfE Plan:
- Provides the strategic framework for the Local Plan.
  - Sets out requirements to be taken forward through the Local Plan in relation to housing and jobs and identifies the Wigan and Bolton Growth Corridor (NorthFold) as a strategic growth location.
  - Identifies important environmental assets which will be protected and enhanced, including the Greater Manchester Wetlands and strategic green infrastructure network.
  - Allocates 4 strategic sites for employment and housing in the borough at M6 Junction 25 (JPA31), North of Mosley Common (JPA32), Pocket Nook (JPA33) and West of Gibfield (JPA34).
  - Supports the delivery of key infrastructure, such as transport and utilities.
  - Defines a new Green Belt boundary for the 9 boroughs.
- 4.6 The PfE authorities worked together to agree the objectively assessed needs for housing and employment across the plan area and identify the existing land supply available for development.
- 4.7 An extensive evidence base was commissioned to underpin and inform the PfE plan, including assessments on transport, housing needs, Green Belt, flood risk, landscape character, viability, and carbon and energy. Much of the evidence and studies were overseen by committees / boards within the Greater Manchester Combined Authority governance structure, which has membership made up from local authorities, public bodies and infrastructure providers. This ensured effective continued cooperation throughout the preparation of the PfE Plan in terms of both evidence preparation and policy development.
- 4.8 The [Places for Everyone - Submission Statement of Common Ground](#) details the extensive collaboration that took place during the preparation of the PfE Plan, including engagement with neighbouring authorities outside of GM.

## **5. Governance**

- 5.1 This draft version of the SoCG has been prepared to accompany the Regulation 18 Initial Draft Local Plan. Wigan Council is committed to working with neighbouring authorities, statutory consultees and other key stakeholders on the preparation of the Local Plan. The SoCG will be kept under ongoing review and will be updated to reflect ongoing Duty to Cooperate discussions.
- 5.2 Where strategic issues have been identified from engagement undertaken so far, which require agreement or ongoing joint working with another local authority and/or statutory consultee, they are set out within Section 7 on Strategic Planning Matters. As the Local Plan progresses, an agreed position on these matters will be sought with the relevant bodies.

## **6. Who are we cooperating with?**

- 6.1 The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 as amended sets out those bodies who are subject to the Duty to Cooperate. Those relevant to the Local Plan are:
- The Environment Agency
  - Historic England (formerly English Heritage)
  - Natural England
  - Highway authorities (National Highways and local authority highway authorities)
  - Transport for Greater Manchester (as an integrated transport authority)
  - The Office of Rail and Road
  - The Civil Aviation Authority
  - Homes England (formerly Homes and Communities Agency)
  - Healthier Wigan Integrated Care Partnership (Clinical Commissioning Board)
  - The National Health Service Commissioning Board
- 6.2 Co-operation on cross-boundary strategic issues is also required with neighbouring authorities. We also actively work with the other GM authorities on a wide range of matters through the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and engage with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority. Wigan's neighbouring authorities are:
- Bolton Council
  - Chorley Council
  - Lancashire County Council
  - Salford City Council

- St Helen’s Borough Council
- Warrington Borough Council
- West Lancashire Borough Council

6.3 PPG advises that Local Enterprise Partnerships and Local Nature Partnerships are not subject to the requirements of the Duty to Cooperate but that local planning authorities must have regard to their activities when preparing local plans, so long as those activities are relevant to plan-making. The Council is also engaging with infrastructure providers in order to establish whether any additional cross-boundary strategic infrastructure is required.

6.4 Wigan Council has engaged positively with the duty to cooperate bodies throughout the plan-making process to date. All such bodies have been invited to comment from the outset of the process to enable any cross-boundary issues to be addressed constructively as the plan has progressed and meetings have been held as appropriate. Table 1 provide a summary of the engagement undertaken so far.

**Table 1: Summary of Duty to Cooperate Collaboration taken to date**

Collaboration	Nature of Collaboration	Date
Engagement on Local Plan subject and scope	Email to Local Plan consultees inviting views on what the Plan should contain	2022
Duty to Cooperate Invitation to raise issues	Email to neighbouring councils and strategic bodies inviting them to raise any issues with regard to the Duty to Cooperate, with the offer of a meeting	2023
Consultation on Local Plan Options and Preferences	Email to Local Plan consultees inviting comments on the Local Plan Options and Preferences	2023
Duty to Cooperate Email Engagement: Potential Strategic Issues	Email to Duty to Cooperate bodies asking for views on identified potential cross-boundary strategic issues and any additional issues, with the offer of a meeting	2024
Duty to Cooperate Meetings	Teams or in-person meetings to discuss Duty to Cooperate / Local Plan matters, where meetings were requested by Duty to Cooperate bodies, or by Wigan Council	Ongoing

Local Plan Pre-Draft Engagement	Emails setting out draft Local Plan Policies considered of most relevance to Duty to Cooperate Bodies	2024 / 2025
Engagement on Initial Draft Plan	Engagement on the Initial Draft Local Plan	April-June 2025

## 7. Strategic matters

- 7.1 This statement of common ground focuses on the strategic cross-boundary matters that are relevant to Wigan Borough, and how they are being addressed through the Local Plan, or where relevant, the Places for Everyone Plan.
- 7.2 Engagement is ongoing and has resulted in the identification of the strategic cross-boundary matters / issues in Table 2 that are discussed in further detail in this statement.
- 7.3 The Local Plan identifies 6 housing-led allocations, all of which were included in the Wigan Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment housing supply that supported the PfE Plan. They are:
- North Leigh Park
  - South Hindley
  - Remaining land south of Atherton
  - East of Atherton
  - Remaining land at Landgate, Ashton-in-Makerfield
  - Westwood Park, Wigan
- 7.4 With the exception of East of Atherton, which lies in close proximity to the boundary with Bolton Borough, none of these housing allocations lie in close proximity to the borough boundary and are not considered to raise any cross boundary strategic matters that require formal agreement with another local authority and/or statutory consultee in the SoCG.
- 7.5 The draft Local Plan identifies 4 new employment-led allocations at:
- Land north of M6 Junction 26, Wigan
  - Moss Industrial Estate Extension, Aspull Common, Leigh
  - Bridgewater West, Astley
  - Land west of Winwick Lane, Lowton
- 7.6 These 4 allocations are considered further in this statement.

**Table 2: Identified strategic cross boundary matters / issues**

Matter / issue	Local Plan theme
Identifying sufficient land to meet Wigan Borough's housing needs as set out in the PFE Plan	Homes
Meeting the need for gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople accommodation	Homes
Impacts of the housing allocation at East of Atherton	Homes
Identifying sufficient land to meet the need for employment sites / premises	Jobs
Impacts of the employment allocation at Land north of M6 Junction 26, Wigan	Jobs
Impacts of the employment allocation at Moss Industrial Estate Extension, Aspull Common, Leigh	Jobs
Impacts of the employment-led allocation at Bridgewater West, Astley	Jobs
Impacts of the employment allocation at Land west of Winwick Lane, Lowton	Jobs
Impact of Local Plan Town Centre policies on neighbouring town centres	Town Centres
Impact of Local Plan policies on the strategic road network	Transport
Impact of Local Plan policies on the Key Route Network	Transport
Impact of Local Plan policies on walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport	Transport
Impact of Local Plan policies on water courses flowing into the borough and from the borough	Environment
Impacts of Local Plan policies on the GM Wetlands Nature Improvement Area	Environment
Impacts of Local Plan policies on Chat Moss	Environment
Impacts of Local Plan policies on strategic Green Infrastructure	Environment
Impact of Local Plan policies on school places	People
Impact of Local Plan policies on healthcare facilities	People

Matter / issue	Local Plan theme
Impacts of Local plan policies on the Wigan–Bolton Growth Corridor (NorthFold)	Various

- 7.7 This section sets how the Local Plan has considered and/or addressed the strategic matters/issues identified in Table 1 above and sets out the position in terms of cooperation at April 2025.

## Homes

### Identifying sufficient land to meet Wigan Borough’s housing needs

- 7.8 The housing requirement for the borough is set out in the PfE Plan. This requires an average of 972 homes per annum (net) to be delivered over the period 2022 – 2039, which equates to 16,527 homes over the plan period.
- 7.9 A total housing supply of 18,686 homes is identified in the borough over the plan period. This is considered to be sufficient to meet our housing requirement with a flexibility allowance to allow for any non-delivery on sites, or delivery at a lower rate than anticipated. Table 3 sets out the sources of housing supply in the borough.

**Table 3: Total housing land supply over the plan period 2022-2039**

	Homes
Completions 2022 – 2024	2,554
Sites allocated in the Places for Everyone Plan	2,199
Proposed site allocations in the Wigan Borough Local Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Leigh Park</li> <li>• South Hindley</li> <li>• Remaining land south of Atherton</li> <li>• East of Atherton</li> <li>• Remaining land at Landgate, Ashton-in-Makerfield</li> <li>• Westwood Park, Wigan</li> </ul>	4,295
SHLAA supply: large sites	8,845
SHLAA supply: small sites	253
Small sites windfall allowance	540
<b>Total identified supply</b>	<b>18,686</b>

- 7.10 We intend to meet our housing need within the borough and do not require adjacent authorities to contribute to meeting our need.

- 7.11 The borough is unable to accommodate any unmet housing need from adjacent local authorities given that Green Belt land has had to be released through the PfE Plan to meet our housing requirement.

Wigan Council intends to meet its housing requirement, as set out in the Places for Everyone Plan, within the borough.

Wigan Council will keep housing need under review as it progresses its Local Plan and address any issues arising in the future through the duty to co-operate process.

Wigan Council is unable to accommodate any unmet housing need from adjacent local authorities and will not be seeking for those authorities to meet part of its housing need.

### **Meeting the need for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople accommodation**

- 7.12 We are required to ensure there are sufficient sites to meet the needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople in the borough. In December 2023 arc4 was commissioned by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) to prepare a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) for the ten Greater Manchester Authorities, including Wigan. This was published in October 2024.
- 7.13 The 2024 GTAA identifies a need for 18 additional pitches for gypsies and travellers in the borough to meet needs to 2040/41. We intend to meet this need in full through the proposed allocation of land at Little Lane in Pemberton, which will form an extension to an existing traveller site. In addition, we are also proposing to safeguard existing sites for continued occupation by gypsies and travellers in the Local Plan.
- 7.14 The provision of plots for travelling showpeople was considered in the 2024 Wigan Housing Needs Assessment. This concluded that, based on current occupancy of existing yards, the Local Plan does not need to allocate any additional land for travelling showpeople.

### **Impacts of the housing allocation at East of Atherton**

- 7.15 Land to the east of Atherton is allocated as an urban extension for around 600 homes. There is also an opportunity to extend the existing industrial estate northwards into the southern part of the allocation to provide further employment opportunities. East of Atherton was identified as a broad location for new development in the 2013 Wigan Local Plan Core Strategy and as part of our housing land supply for the PfE Plan.

- 7.16 At its nearest point, the proposed allocation is just under 400 metres from the border with Bolton Borough. No significant cross-boundary issues have been identified over and above those that already exist, including the ability for Atherton residents to access job opportunities at Logistics North by walking, wheeling and cycling, but Wigan Council and Bolton Council will work together to consider any cross-boundary infrastructure requirements related to its development.

## **Jobs**

### **Identifying sufficient land to meet the need for employment sites and premises**

- 7.17 Wigan Council commissioned an Economic Market and Employment Land Assessment (EMELA) in 2024 to support the development of the Local Plan. The EMELA concludes that the supply of suitable land to meet economic development purposes in Wigan Borough is not sufficient to meet needs forecast over the Local Plan period, both quantitatively and qualitatively. There is a requirement therefore to allocate new land which would deliver sites and premises which can better align with the requirements of the borough's core and cross-cutting sectors in terms of location, quality profile and environment. The projected demand assessment estimates that there is net additional demand for 134.9 ha of employment land or 647,211 sqm of floorspace (E(g)(i), E(g)(ii), E(g)(iii), B2 and B8) across Wigan Borough over the Local Plan period to 2040.
- 7.18 The Council can demonstrate a supply of up to 452,100 sqm of employment floorspace in the urban area. Sites allocated through the PfE Plan, some 200,500 sqm, have contributed to the supply of employment land but as the EMELA has subsequently confirmed this does not go far enough to address need in the borough over the period of this Plan. The EMELA has identified a likely mismatch between some of the employment land supply previously identified in the borough, as a portion will not match occupier requirements, especially the requirements of those in core and cross-cutting sectors and would constrain the ability to secure and attract businesses recognised as key to creating a more diversified and resilient economy.
- 7.19 The Local Plan (2025) proposes up to an additional 545,000 sqm of floorspace on four new employment-led sites at:
- Land north of M6 Junction 26, Wigan

- Moss Industrial Estate extension, Aspull Common
- Bridgewater West, Astley
- Land west of Winwick Lane, Lowton.

7.20 Up to 300,000 sqm, of this additional supply, on land west of Winwick Lane, is expected to contribute to a nationally significant infrastructure project with the adjacent land at Parkside East in St. Helens Borough. Further details are set out below.

### **Impacts of the employment allocation at Land north of M6 Junction 26, Wigan**

- 7.21 Land north of M6 Junction 26 is proposed for a substantial, high quality employment development in the M6 Corridor and a link road from M6 Junction 26 to Spring Road at Kitt Green. The proposed allocation is anticipated to be built out in its entirety within the Plan period.
- 7.22 The site has the potential to have implications on the M6 and M58 motorways, as identified by National Highways, and on the local road network nearby in West Lancashire. The western edge of the site borders the M6 motorway with access to both M6 Junction 26 and Junction 1 of the M58 motorways to the south. West Lancashire Borough is located around 0.8 miles to the west.
- 7.23 Wigan Council will continue to work with National Highways as the proposals for Land north of M6 Junction 26 are worked up in more detail, to ensure that there is a full understanding of the impact of proposed development (both cumulative and individual).
- 7.24 Wigan Council and National Highways have worked together to develop a scope of work to assess the impact of these proposals on the local and strategic road network. This work culminated in the development of a Traffic Impact Note which included consideration of this proposals for the site. This work will inform discussions on the details of the required mitigation measures and to ensure that these measures are both feasible and deliverable.
- 7.25 Wigan Council will share the output from that work and continue to work with neighbouring authorities, including Lancashire County Council and West Lancashire Borough Council, to address any issues arising from the allocation of the site through the Duty to Cooperate process.

Wigan Council will continue to work with National Highways to ensure there is a full understanding of the impact of the proposed
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Land north of M6 Junction 26 (both cumulative and individual) and to agree the detail of the required mitigation measures.

Wigan Council will share the outputs from the modelling work and seek to address any issues arising from the allocation of the Land north of M6 Junction 26 on the neighbouring authority of West Lancashire Borough Council; including agreeing the mechanisms by which any mitigation measures within West Lancashire will be carried out with Lancashire CC, as highways authority, if required.

Wigan Council will provide information on the potential changes to commuting and migration flows arising as a result of the overall development proposed through the Local Plan particularly as they relate to West Lancashire and provide greater clarity on their likely consequences for the transport infrastructure and networks within West Lancashire. This will form part of the Duty to Co-operate discussions.

Wigan Council will continue to work with Transport for Greater Manchester on any improvements required to the public transport network to support the development of the site.

### **Impacts of the employment allocation at Moss Industrial Estate Extension, Aspull Common, Leigh**

- 7.26 Land to the north of Moss Industrial Estate is proposed as an extension to the industrial estate to accommodate business uses, particularly within the manufacturing, distribution, construction and health and social care sectors. The proposed allocation is located to the north of the A572 St Helens Road / Newton Road, which links into the A580 East Lancashire Road and is proposed to be built out in its entirety within the Plan period.
- 7.27 The site could potentially impact on M6 Junction 23, which is situated within St Helens district, as identified by National Highways. St Helens Council have a number of allocations that impact M6 Junction 23 and so discussions are ongoing with St Helens Council, as part of wider cumulative impacts on the junction.

Wigan Council will work with St Helens Council, in liaison with National Highways, to ensure cumulative (cross boundary) impacts are appropriately considered for M6 Junction 23.

Wigan Council will continue to work with Transport for Greater Manchester on any improvements required to the public transport network to support the development of the site.

### **Impacts of the employment-led allocation at Bridgewater West, Astley**

- 7.28 Land at Bridgewater West, Astley is proposed for an employment-led development, including residential and leisure/tourism uses. The site, which is located to the south of the A580 and Astley, is expected to deliver 50,000sqm of high-quality business floorspace for Class E(g) (i) office, Class E(g) (ii) research and development and Class E(g) (iii) light industrial uses, with some small scale Class B2 general industry uses with access from the A580 East Lancashire Road. Up to 300 homes are expected to be delivered. The proposed allocation is expected to be built out in its entirety within the Plan period.
- 7.29 The site is situated adjacent to the borough boundary with the City of Salford.

Wigan Council will engage with Salford City Council, in liaison with National Highways and the GMCA / Transport for Greater Manchester, to ensure cumulative (cross boundary) impacts for both road and public transport are appropriately considered.

Wigan Council will continue to work with Transport for Greater Manchester on any improvements required to the public transport network to support the development of the site.

### **Impacts of the employment allocation at Land West of Winwick Lane, Lowton**

- 7.30 Land west of Winwick Lane is proposed for a modern industrial and logistics development of around 300,000sq.m of high quality B2 and B8 employment floorspace. The site forms part of the wider proposed cross-boundary Parkside East strategic rail freight interchange and logistics site adjacent in St Helens that is being promoted as Intermodal Logistics Park North (ILP North). As a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project, the combined site of ILP North is seeking consent through the Development Consent Order (DCO) process, alongside the promotion of this part of the site through this Local Plan.
- 7.31 The development will impact on key infrastructure within Wigan Borough, including the local and strategic highway network. It is therefore essential that Wigan Council and St. Helens Council, in liaison with National Highways, Warrington Borough Council and the GMCA / Transport for Greater Manchester work to ensure that these impacts are appropriately mitigated.

Wigan Council will collaborate with St. Helens Council, in liaison with National Highways, and Warrington Borough Council and the GMCA / Transport for Greater Manchester to consider any cross boundary infrastructure requirements or other issues relating to the development of the wider proposed cross-boundary Parkside East strategic rail freight interchange and logistics site adjacent in St Helens that is being promoted as Intermodal Logistics Park North (ILP North), including mitigating any impacts on the road network and neighbouring communities.

The Land west of Winwick Lane has been included in the red edge of the Development Consent Order for Intermodal Logistics Park North (ILP North formerly Parkside East). As such, Wigan Council is working proactively with St Helens Council, Warrington Borough Council and National Highways on the proposals for the development of the site. Wigan Council is a member of the Transport Working Group which is reviewing the proposals for the site. Wigan Council will continue to engage with this working group to ensure any cross boundary infrastructure requirements or other issues relating to the development of the sites at West of Winwick Lane and ILP North for employment uses are mitigated.

## Town centres

### Impact of Local Plan Town Centre policies on neighbouring town centres

- 7.32 Wigan is a town centre of sub-regional significance that, historically, has attracted custom from outside of the borough. Leigh is our second largest town centre and also, historically, has attracted some custom from outside of the borough. Some of our other town centres, such as Ashton-in-Makerfield and Standish, are located close to the borough boundary and serve a catchment that extends into neighbouring districts. Additional development in these centres, or in out-of-town locations, could potentially impact upon centres located in neighbouring districts.
- 7.33 The Local Plan includes policies to regenerate and improve the borough's existing town centres but does not propose major new retail schemes. We are ambitious for our town centres but only to the extent that they maximise their roles within their established catchment areas, to better serve their communities and claw back trade from larger centres to a degree. That includes larger centres within the borough such as Leigh and Wigan but also larger centres outside the borough including Manchester, Liverpool and the Trafford Centre.

- 7.34 No significant cross-boundary issues have been raised as part of duty-to-cooperate discussions to date regarding retail or town centres.

Wigan Council will continue to engage with neighbouring authorities to ensure that any cross boundary impacts of Local Plan town centre policies are appropriately considered.

## Transport

- 7.35 Policies that we had suggested at the Options and Preferences stage on walking, wheeling and cycling, bus, rail and road are not being taken forward as we have determined that policies in the PFE Plan have sufficient content for the development plan and, otherwise, the now adopted Wigan Borough Transport Strategy (December 2024) has the content needed to progress matters with our transport partners.

### Impact of Local Plan policies on the Strategic Road Network (SRN)

- 7.36 National Highways is responsible for operating, maintaining and improving England's motorways and major A roads. Key motorways are the M6, M58, M61, M60 and M62. There are no major A roads managed by National Highways close to the boundary of Wigan Borough but one that does provide a key connection is the A5036 from the western end of the M58 motorway to Liverpool Docks, within the Liverpool City Region.
- 7.37 Wigan Council has engaged with National Highways throughout the preparation of the Local Plan and continues to work positively with them in developing the supporting evidence base, including on the proposed allocations.
- 7.38 As the Integrated Transport Authority for Greater Manchester, we also work in partnership with Transport for Greater Manchester on strategic cross boundary transport matters such as those affecting the strategic road network.

Wigan Council will continue to work with National Highways to ensure there is a full understanding of the impact of the key allocations (both cumulative and individual) within the Local Plan to agree the detail of the required mitigation measures and to keep the Infrastructure Delivery Plan under review in respect of schemes relating to the Strategic Road Network.

Wigan Council will continue to work in partnership with Transport for Greater Manchester on strategic cross boundary transport matters such as those affecting the strategic road network.

### **Impact of Local Plan policies on the Key Route Network (KRN)**

- 7.39 Transport for Greater Manchester have strategic oversight and management of the Key Route Network in Greater Manchester. They monitor and report on performance and develop policies that will keep traffic moving, which is essential for commuting and for freight and logistics. Key sections of the Key Route Network within Wigan Borough are the A49, A577, A58 and the A580 East Lancashire Road.
- 7.40 Wigan Council has engaged with Transport for Greater Manchester throughout the preparation of the Local Plan and continues to work positively with them in developing the supporting evidence base, including on the proposed allocations and the work required to secure improvements to the A580 East Lancashire Road.

Wigan Council will continue to work with Transport for Greater Manchester to ensure there is a full understanding of the impact of the key allocations (both cumulative and individual) within the Local Plan to agree the detail of the required mitigation measures and to keep the Infrastructure Delivery Plan under review in respect of schemes relating to the Key Route Network.

### **Impact of Local Plan policies on walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport**

- 7.41 The Draft Local Plan does not include any general policies on improvements to walking, wheeling and cycling. It was agreed that it is addressed sufficiently within the PfE Plan and the Wigan Borough Transport Strategy. Wigan Council worked collaboratively with Transport for Greater Manchester and other key stakeholders on the development of both documents.
- 7.42 Given the cross-boundary nature of public transport, there is a requirement for co-operative working between Wigan, Transport for Greater Manchester, the Lancashire Combined County Authority, the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, St Helens Council and Warrington Borough Council to increase the range of destinations and the quality and frequency of services. Bus franchising is now proposed by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, with St Helens being the first area for it to be rolled out. This provides a unique opportunity for two franchised regions to work together to deliver improved bus services between the boroughs.
- 7.43 There is also a need to work collaboratively on cross-boundary walking, wheeling and cycling connections at key locations across the borough such as the A580 East Lancashire Road, A579 Winwick Lane and the A577 Orrell Road.

Wigan Council will work with Transport for Greater Manchester, the Lancashire Combined County Authority, the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, St Helens Council and Warrington Borough Council to improve the quality and frequency of cross boundary public transport services and the number of destinations served.

Wigan Council will work collaboratively with partners on cross-boundary walking, wheeling and cycling connections.

## Environment

### Impact of Local Plan policies on water courses flowing into the borough and from the borough

- 7.44 Wigan Council is designated as a lead local flood authority (LLFA) and as such leads in managing local flood risks in partnership with other risk management authorities and stakeholders. The nature of fluvial flood risk inevitably means that its impact can be felt across boundaries. The local plan process has identified flood risk mitigation as a potential strategic cross boundary issue. The council as LLFA and LPA works in partnership with the Environment Agency and other stakeholders through regular meetings to identify options for mitigating flood risk in the borough. This includes the potential for a flood storage basin and natural flood management on Borsdane Brook and future flood storage options in the Leigh East catchment.

Wigan Council will continue to work with the Environment Agency, United Utilities, other stakeholders and neighbouring authorities to protect communities, businesses, and infrastructure from flooding.

### Impacts of Local Plan policies on the GM Wetlands Nature Improvement Area

- 7.45 The Great Manchester Wetland is a diverse landscape of water, fen, wet grassland, wet woodland, and lowland raised bog. It is a Nature Improvement Area covering some 48,000 hectares, focusing on the Wetlands of Wigan (The Flashes), the mosslands of Chat Moss and Risley Moss to the west and southwest of Manchester and the Mersey Wetlands corridor stretching from Rixton to Warrington.
- 7.46 The whole of Wigan Borough is within the Nature Improvement Area boundary. Given the cross-boundary nature of the designation, there is a requirement for co-operative working between Wigan Council, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Salford City Council, Trafford Borough Council, Warrington Borough Council and

other stakeholders such as Lancashire Wildlife Trust to preserve and enhance this ecological network.

Wigan Council will continue to work with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Salford City Council, Trafford Borough Council, Warrington Borough Council and other stakeholders to preserve and enhance the GM Wetlands Nature Improvement Area.

### **Impacts of Local Plan policies on Chat Moss**

- 7.47 Chat Moss is a large area of peat bog that covers parts of Wigan, Salford and Trafford Boroughs and falls within the Great Manchester Wetlands Nature Improvement Area. Approximately 800 hectares of Chat Moss is within Wigan Borough; located in the far southeastern corner of the borough to the south of Astley Green, with boundaries to Salford and Warrington on the eastern, southern and western boundaries. Parts of the area now form the newly designated Risley, Holcroft and Chat Moss National Nature Reserve. We will continue to work in partnership with neighbouring authorities and other stakeholders such as Lancashire Wildlife Trust and Natural England to protect and enhance the Chat Moss area.

Wigan Council will continue to work in partnership with neighbouring authorities, Natural England and other partners to protect and enhance the Chat Moss area.

### **Impacts of Local Plan policies on strategic Green Infrastructure**

- 7.48 Green infrastructure networks are cross boundary in nature connecting Wigan Borough with all our surrounding neighbours, such as that which has seen the creation of an extensive country park across Wigan, Bolton and Salford at Logistics North. We will also continue to work in partnership with our local authority neighbours and stakeholders such as Natural England through mechanisms like the GM Wetlands Nature Improvement Area and Nature GM (Local Nature Partnership). The aim of this is to continue to protect and enhance our Green Infrastructure network including connectivity to our neighbouring authority areas through landscape scale habitat restoration such as that which has resulted in the designation of the Risley, Holcroft and Chat Moss National Nature Reserve across Warrington, Wigan and Salford.

Wigan Council will continue to work in partnership with our local authority neighbours and stakeholders such as Natural England

through mechanisms such as the GM Wetlands Nature Improvement Area and Nature GM.

## People

### Impacts of Local Plan policies on school places

- 7.49 New housing development can have an impact on capacity in neighbouring districts and on capacity in Wigan from neighbouring districts. Wigan Council's School Organisation Team has annual meetings with Lancashire County Council to discuss capacity issues and engages with the other neighbouring authorities on these matters as appropriate, to ensure that cross-boundary movements are considered in school planning.
- 7.50 With the exception of East of Atherton, which lies close to the boundary with Bolton, none of the proposed housing-led allocations in the Local Plan are in close proximity to the Borough's boundary. Engagement with Bolton Council has confirmed that there is relatively little movement of primary school children from/to Wigan Borough. Continued low birth rates mean that measures have been taken to reduce capacity at a number of primary schools in Bolton, to avoid the problem of surplus places arising. However, in contrast, there is significant pressure on secondary places in Bolton, which is likely to remain until at least 2032.
- 7.51 Chorley Council indicated that there is some pressure on secondary school places in the borough. However, only a limited number of pupils from Wigan Borough go to secondary school in Chorley. Lancashire County Council have indicated that there remains a surplus of secondary school places in both West Lancashire and Chorley and that both districts have a surplus of primary school places in the school planning areas that lies closest to Wigan Borough.
- 7.52 No significant cross-boundary issues regarding school places have been raised as part of engagement to date.

Wigan Council will continue to engage with neighbouring authorities on cross-boundary pupil movement as part of school place planning.

### Impact of Local Plan policies on healthcare facilities

- 7.53 Engagement is ongoing with the Healthier Wigan Integrated Care Partnership and with NHS Property Services, and we are aware that one facility at least, the Boothstown Medical Centre at Parr Bridge

Retail Park in Mosley Common has a significant proportion of people on its register from Salford but this is not of concern. To date, significant cross-boundary issues have not been identified.

Wigan Council will continue to engage with health partners on the impact of the Local Plan on cross-boundary healthcare facilities.

## **Wigan-Bolton Growth Corridor (Northfold)**

### **Impacts of Local Plan policies on the Wigan–Bolton Growth Corridor (NorthFold)**

- 7.54 The Wigan-Bolton Growth Corridor, now known as NorthFold, is one of 6 growth locations established across Greater Manchester through the Places for Everyone Plan and now being followed up through the Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan review. The growth corridor is focused on Wigan town centre and the strategic sites at South Hindley, North Leigh Park, West of Gibfield and on the M6 Corridor at Junctions 25 and 26, as well as improved transport links particularly the new road and rail infrastructure, which will greatly improve access to employment opportunities. Additionally, a Food Innovation Centre is identified as a catalyst project as part of NorthFold being a location for food manufacturing, resilience and innovation.
- 7.55 Wigan Council will continue to work with Bolton Council, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Transport for Greater Manchester to support the economic prospects of the Wigan-Bolton Growth Corridor, and to secure and maximise the benefits of new transport infrastructure within it.

Wigan Council and Bolton Council agree to work together, in liaison with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Transport for Greater Manchester and National Highways, to consider any cross-boundary infrastructure requirements or other housing and economic development opportunities related to the Wigan–Bolton Growth Corridor (NorthFold).