

Integrated Assessment of the Wigan Borough Local Plan

Regulation 19
IA Report Non-Technical Summary

Wigan Council

August 2026

Quality information

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 This is a Non-Technical Summary document which concisely summarises the Integrated Assessment for the regulation 19 version of the Wigan Borough Local Plan.
- 1.1.2 A new Local Plan is needed to reflect and respond to the challenges and opportunities currently facing the borough. This includes reinventing town centres, creating thriving communities, delivering key infrastructure, and protecting the environment. Local Plans are also required to be reviewed at least every five years to ensure they remain up to date.
- 1.1.3 The new Local Plan provides an opportunity to respond to changes in national policy and legislation, and to reflect the Council's key strategies spatially. It will look forward to 2039, replacing the saved policies in both the 2013 Local Plan Core Strategy and the 2006 Unitary Development Plan.
- 1.1.4 The purpose of an Integrated Assessment is to consider and communicate the likely effects of an emerging plan, with a view to minimising negative effects and maximising positive effects. Integrated Assessment involves undertaking the legally required Sustainability Appraisal alongside an Equality Impact Assessment, which looks at how a plan or project might affect different groups of people, helping to ensure equality, and a Health Impact Assessment, which considers how people's health could be affected, aiming to reduce health inequalities.
- 1.1.5 The plan area is illustrated on **Figure 1-1** below.

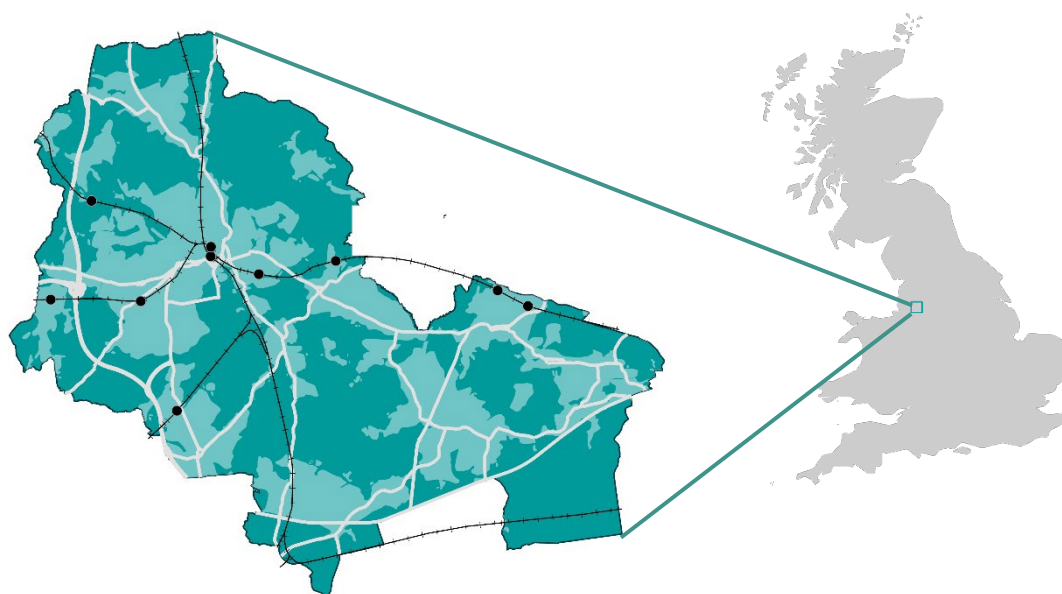


Figure 1-1: The Plan Area

2. Scoping

- 2.1.1 A scoping exercise was carried out in order to establish the sustainability issues and objectives for the area. The topics reflect broad areas of sustainability which could be significantly affected by the Plan.
- 2.1.2 Table 2-1: IA Topics and Objectives Table 2-1 below shows the sustainability topics which have been 'scoped in' for consideration within this Integrated Assessment and the subsequent Sustainability Objectives.

Table 2-1: IA Topics and Objectives

IA topic	Sustainability Objectives
Housing	To provide an appropriate quantity and quality of new homes to meet needs.
Health and Community	Enable and support people to be active, safe, and healthy by ensuring good access to a range of services / facilities and the natural environment, and creation of well designed, inclusive, and beautiful places.
Equality and Diversity	To provide equality of opportunity for people with a protected characteristic whilst celebrating diversity.
Climate Change	To adapt to, mitigate and be resilient to the impacts of climate change.
Water	To positively address the issues of water quality and quantity and manage flood risk.
Environmental Quality	To minimise the adverse impacts of development on environmental resources and amenity.
Historic Environment	To protect and enhance the quality, integrity, and distinctiveness of the historic environment of Wigan Borough.
Landscape and Townscape	To protect and enhance the quality, integrity and distinctiveness of the borough's landscapes and townscapes.
Biodiversity and Geodiversity	To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, ensuring that current ecological networks and future improvements in habitat connectivity are not compromised.
Resource Efficiency	To improve resource efficiency in design, construction, and operation, increase energy generation from renewable sources and support the circular economy.
Land and Soil Resources	Protect, preserve, and promote the efficient use of land, soil, and other natural resources.
Transportation	To support the delivery of an improved and integrated transport system that provides good alternative choices to travel by car.
Economy	To support the development of an innovative, diverse, competitive, higher value and low-carbon economy locally that supports job growth and good access to jobs training and education.
Town and Local Centres	To improve the vitality and viability of our town and local centres.

3. Identifying and appraising options

3.1 Housing

- 3.1.1 The Council has concluded that there are no reasonable alternatives to its proposed approach to housing delivery, but given the strategic importance of housing this is explained briefly below.
- 3.1.2 Wigan is one of nine boroughs covered by the Places for Everyone (PfE) Development Plan, which sets a requirement for the Borough of 972 new homes a year over 15 years to 2039 (16,527 dwellings) and provides the starting point for the Wigan Borough Local Plan's housing strategy. Updated national planning rules introduced in December 2024 would, if applied directly, have significantly increased this figure. However, transitional arrangements protect adopted joint plans such as PfE, and the Council considers it unreasonable to plan for a different target than the one already agreed through the PfE Joint Plan.
- 3.1.3 Given upcoming changes to how local plans are prepared, and uncertainty over future housing needs pending a possible Greater Manchester-wide spatial strategy, it would be premature to set a new housing growth strategy at this stage. The Council has instead committed to reviewing this through an early Plan update.
- 3.1.4 The Council also considered whether there are reasonable alternative ways in which it can deliver the housing strategy set out in the PfE Policy JP-H1. The approach within the draft Plan relies upon a range of sources as set out in Error! Reference source not found. below.

Table 3-1: Wigan housing supply over the plan period

Sources	Homes
Completions 2022 - 2024	2,554
Sites allocated in the Places for Everyone Plan	2,199
Sites allocated in the Wigan Borough Local Plan	4,295
SHLAA supply: large sites	8,845
SHLAA supply: small sites	253
Small sites windfall allowance	540
Total identified supply	18,686

- 3.1.5 This supply is considered reliable and realistic, and delivers 2,159 more homes than required, a surplus that gives flexibility and confidence the target can be met without releasing Green Belt land. As there are no exceptional circumstances justifying Green Belt release, there are no reasonable alternatives to the proposed housing strategy.

- 3.1.6 The Council also considered whether different strategic sites could be allocated instead of those in the draft Plan. This would mean releasing new Green Belt land and abandoning sites already tested through the plan making process that are central to regeneration in the borough, an approach considered unreasonable.

3.2 Employment

- 3.2.1 As part of the plan-making process, the Council explored whether there are reasonable alternatives in relation to the strategy for employment growth.
- 3.2.2 The Economic Market and Employment Land Assessment (2024) concludes that whilst the borough's existing employment areas are well occupied and provide a valuable economic function, more employment sites of the right quality and in the right places are needed to meet modern business requirements. This is due to a range of factors, including:
- Businesses in the borough want to grow but some premises are outdated or in the wrong place.
 - There is a lack of sites with the right attributes to accommodate growth and demand in key employment sectors.
 - There is a high degree of out-commuting.
 - Competition from neighbouring authorities is strong.
 - There is a need to address inequalities in the borough.
- 3.2.3 The council recognises these issues and has sought to identify potentially suitable sites. As part of this process, the council invited landowners to submit sites that could be suitable to address such needs as part of previous consultation on the emerging plan. Eight sites (displayed in **Table 3-2** below) have been identified as potentially suitable, and these have been explored through the Integrated Appraisal.

Table 3-2: Site options identified for employment growth in Wigan

Option	Site
1	Land north of Moss Industrial Estate.
2	Land east of Warrington Road.
3	Land north of M6 Junction 26
4	Bridgewater West, Astley
5	Drummers Lane, Bryn
6	South of Astley Point
7	South of Pennington
8	Land West of Winwick Lane

3.3 Appraisal methods

- 3.3.1 The delivery of employment land across the borough was assessed against the Integrated Assessment Framework to determine the likely effects of each option on the borough and its sustainability outcomes. Where there are clear references to mitigation and enhancement measures these have been considered in the assessments.
- 3.3.2 To determine effects, account is taken of a range of factors including the magnitude of change, the sensitivity of receptors, the likelihood of effects occurring, the length and permanence of effects, and cumulative effects. This gives a picture of how significant effects are likely to be, ranging from neutral, minor, moderate, and major. The table below sets out the scale that has been used to record effects.

Major positive		Major negative	
Moderate positive		Moderate negative	
Minor positive		Minor negative	
Neutral		Uncertainty	?

Table 3-3: Summary of effects for employment land options

	North of Moss Industrial Estate	Land East of Warrington Road	Land north of M6 Junction 26	Bridgewater West, Astley	Drummers Lane, Bryn	South of Astley Point	South of Pennington	Winwick Lane
Housing	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Health and communities	Minor/mod -ve	Neutral	Moderate -ve	Moderate -ve?	Minor -ve	Neutral	Moderate -ve	Minor -ve
Equalities	Minor +ve	Minor +ve	Major +ve	Moderate +ve?	Minor +ve	Minor +ve	Minor +ve	Minor +ve
Climate change	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Water quality	Minor -ve?	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Moderate -ve?	Minor -ve?
Environmental quality	Minor -ve?	Minor -ve?	Minor/mod -ve	Minor/mod -ve	Minor -ve	Minor -ve?	Minor -ve	Neutral
Historic environment	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Moderate -ve ?	Neutral
Landscapes and townscape	Minor/mod -ve	Minor -ve	Moderate -ve	Minor/mod -ve	Moderate -ve	Minor -ve	Moderate -ve	Minor/mod -ve
Biodiversity and geodiversity	Minor/mod -ve	Neutral	Minor -ve?	Minor/mod -ve	Minor -ve?	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Moderate -ve
Resource efficiency	Neutral	Neutral	Minor -ve	Minor -ve?	Minor -ve?	Neutral	Minor -ve	Minor -ve?
Land and soil	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Moderate -ve	Moderate -ve	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Moderate -ve	Moderate -ve
Transportation	Minor +ve?	Minor +ve?	Moderate +ve?	Minor +ve	Minor +ve	Minor +ve?	Neutral	Neutral
Economy	Moderate +ve?	Minor +ve	Major +ve	Major +ve ?	Moderate +ve	Minor +ve ?	Moderate +ve	Major +ve
Town and local centres	Neutral	Neutral	Minor +ve	Minor -ve ?	Neutral	Minor -ve ?	Neutral	Neutral

4. Employment strategy options

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 Each site option was individually assessed to identify local constraints and opportunities (**Table 3-3**). By combining these sites into different packages, the Council evaluated alternative strategies for employment growth, examining how land quantity and distribution affect outcomes. This section outlines those strategic options considered reasonable for further appraisal through the Integrated Assessment (IA).
- 4.1.2 A total of five alternative strategy options have been considered as part of the process:
- Option 1 – Rely on existing and pipeline supply (Places for Everyone baseline position)
 - Option 2a – Economic aspirations for transformation – Focus on East Lancashire Road Corridor
 - Option 2b – Economic aspirations for transformation – Focus on further strengthening the M6 corridor
 - Option 2c – Economic aspirations for transformation – Balanced approach in both growth corridors
 - Option 3 – Maximise opportunities at all sites – East Lancashire Road Corridor and further strengthening the M6 corridor

4.2 Places for Everyone

- 4.2.1 The Places for Everyone Plan allocates one significant employment site in the borough at M6 Junction 25 (for around 140,000 sqm of employment floorspace) and two further mixed-use allocations comprising some employment at West of Gibfield (45,500sqm) and Pocket Nook, Lowton (15,000sqm).
- 4.2.2 Taking into account existing employment land supply and these three allocations, there is sufficient land to meet identified needs in terms of the amount of land. In this respect, a reasonable approach would be to rely upon the framework provided by the Places for Everyone Plan and not seek to identify further opportunities for employment growth involving Green Belt release within this local plan.
- 4.2.3 **Figure 4-1:** No additional employment land allocations overleaf highlights the spatial distribution of employment land under this option.

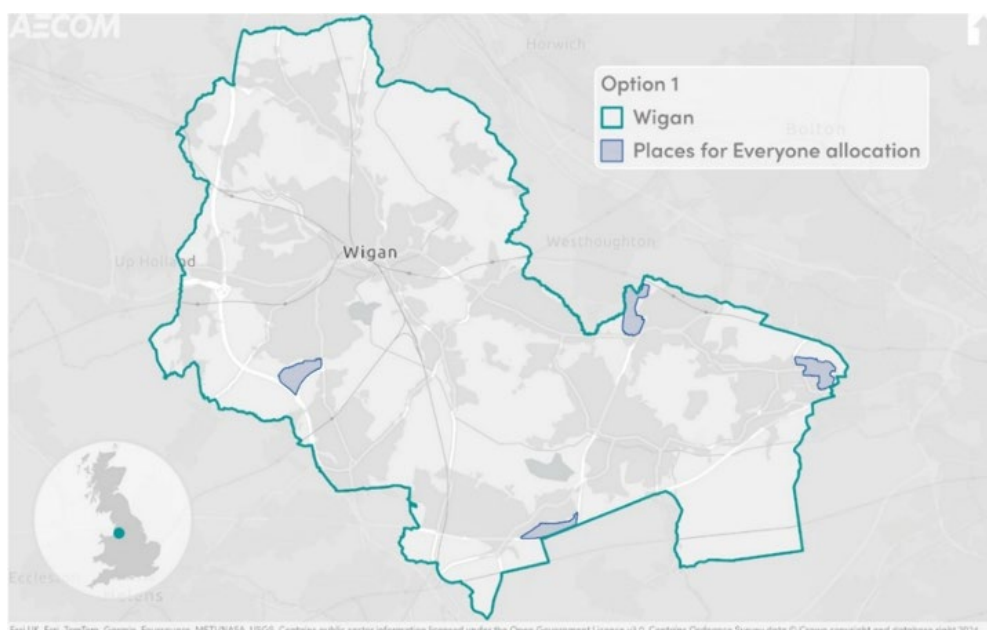


Figure 4-1: No additional employment land allocations

4.3 Aspirational growth

- 4.3.1 Wigan Council has an ambitious growth agenda seeking to create a more resilient and inclusive economy. The Wigan Economic Market and Employment Land Assessment (2024) concludes that whilst the borough's existing employment areas are well occupied and provide a valuable economic function, more employment sites of the right quality and in the right places are needed to meet modern business requirements to compete strongly economically and enable more local people to fulfil their potential with better and higher paid jobs.
- 4.3.2 Though there is a sufficient supply of land in terms of the total amount of space available, there is evidence that a greater emphasis needs to be provided upon higher-quality premises that are attractive to the market. Such opportunities have specific locational features that cannot necessarily be met through the repurposing of existing employment land. There is also a need to be mindful of the value that existing employment sites provide across a range of sectors. Therefore, to support aspirational economic growth the Council consider it appropriate to explore new / additional locations for employment land across the borough in suitable locations.
- 4.3.3 Another reason for exploring additional employment land stems from consultation feedback on the options and preferences document. Several respondents suggested that elements of the employment land supply should be considered uncertain, and as such additional site allocations should be made within the emerging Plan.
- 4.3.4 Taking the above factors into account, it is considered reasonable to test alternatives for growth that go beyond the 'status quo' provided by the existing land supply and the allocations made within the Places for Everyone Plan.

- 4.3.5 A range of sites have been proposed and / or identified as reasonable options for accommodating the type of employment land required to support aspirational growth. The sites are listed and illustrated in **Figures 4-2 to 4-5** overleaf.
- 4.3.6 The sites all fall within two broad 'corridors for growth'.
- The M6 corridor, which has been identified as a prime location for the growth of industrial / logistics land.
 - The A580 corridor, which presents some more nuanced opportunities for growth in emerging sectors.
- 4.3.7 The Council considers that a combination of sites could be allocated to provide diversity in supply and to target different growth sectors. Four strategic options were identified and appraised, with the findings presented within the Interim IA Report (March 2025).
- 4.3.8 It is recognised that there are many other combinations of sites that could be tested, but there is a need for appraisal to be proportionate and meaningful. This means that the options need to be sufficiently distinct from one another.

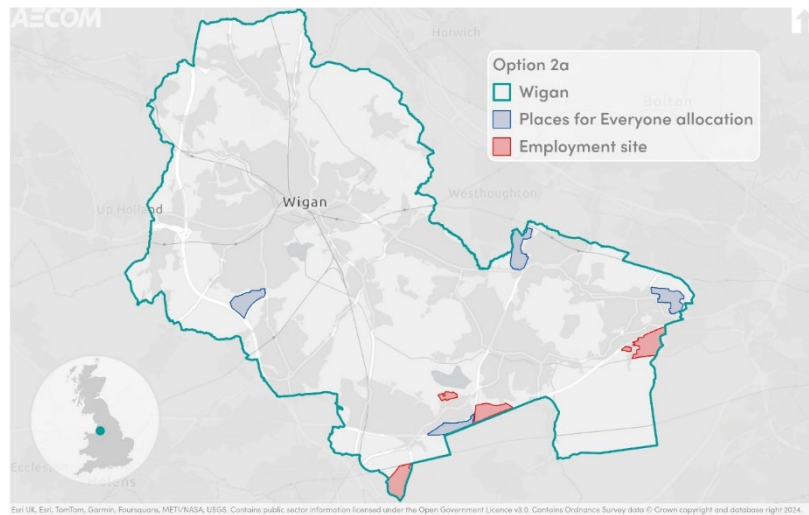


Figure 4-2: Focus on East Lancashire Road Corridor

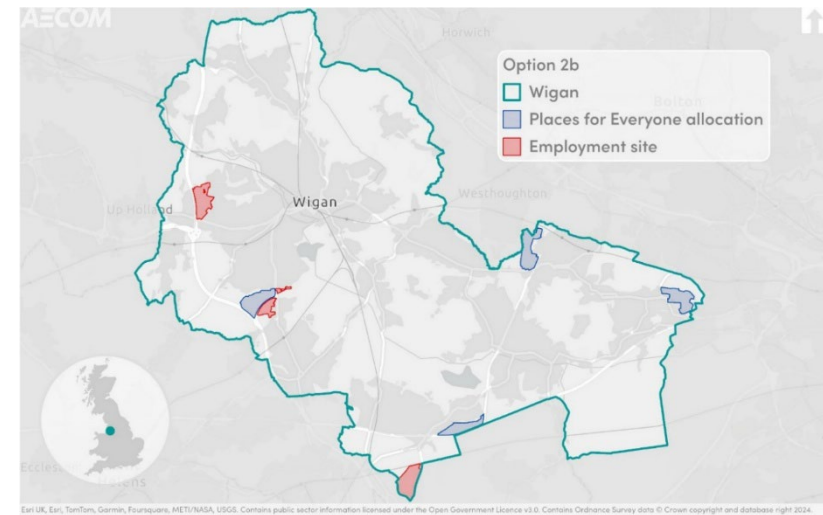


Figure 4-3: Focus on strengthening the M6 Corridor

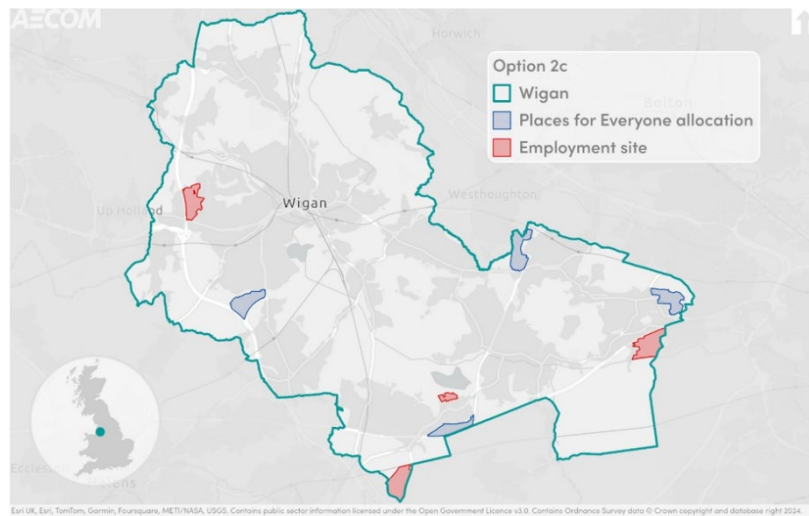


Figure 4-4: Balanced / dispersed growth along corridors

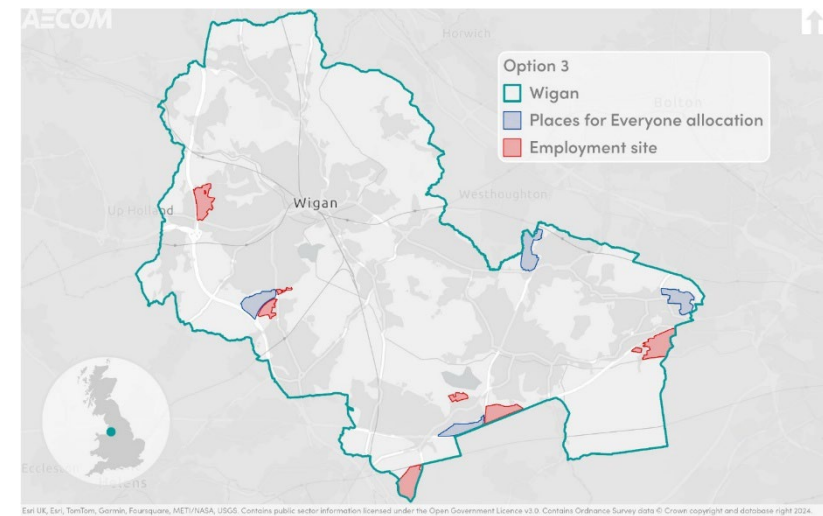


Figure 4-5: Maximise opportunities

5. Appraisal of employment strategy options

5.1.1 **Table 5-1** below sets out a summary of the effects for each of the strategic employment options.

Table 5-1: Summary of effects for the strategic options

	Option 1	Option 2a	Option 2b	Option 2c	Option 3
Housing	Neutral	Minor +ve ?	Minor +ve ?	Minor +ve ?	Minor +ve ?
Health and communities	Neutral	Moderate-ve	Moderate-ve	Moderate-ve	Major -ve
Equalities	Neutral	Minor +ve	Major +ve	Major +ve	Major +ve
Climate change	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Water quality	Neutral	Moderate-ve	Neutral	Minor -ve	Moderate -ve
Environmental quality	Neutral	Minor -v	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Moderate -ve ?
Historic environment	Neutral	Moderate -ve	Neutral	Neutral	Moderate-ve
Landscapes and townscapes	Neutral	Moderate -ve	Major -ve	Moderate-ve	Major -ve
Biodiversity and geodiversity	Neutral	Moderate -ve ?	Minor / Moderate -ve	Minor / Moderate -ve	Moderate-ve
Resource efficiency	Neutral	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Moderate-ve
Land and soil	Neutral	Major -ve	Major -ve	Major -ve	Major -ve
Transportation	Neutral	Moderate +ve	Moderate +ve	Major +ve	Major +ve
		Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Minor -ve	Moderate-ve
Economy	Neutral / minor -ve	Moderate +ve	Moderate +ve	Major +ve?	Major +ve
Town centres	Minor +ve?	Minor -ve?	Minor -ve?	Minor -ve?	Minor -ve?
			Minor +ve	Minor +ve	Minor +ve

5.1.2 Whilst the options are predicted to have broadly similar effects for some sustainability topics, it is possible to differentiate them in terms of their relative performance (or 'ranking'). Table 5-2 overleaf summarises the rank of each option against the appraisal topics.

Table 54-2: Relative ranking for the strategic options

	Option 1	Option 2a	Option 2b	Option 2c	Option 3
Housing	4	3	2	2	1
Health and communities	1	3	3	2	4
Equalities	5	4	3	2	1
Climate change	1	2	2	2	3
Water quality	1	4	2	3	4
Environmental quality	1	2	3	2	4
Historic environment	1	2	1	1	2
Landscapes and townscapes	1	2	3	2	4
Biodiversity and geodiversity	1	3	2	2	4
Resource efficiency	1	2	2	2	3
Land and soil	1	4	2	3	5
Transportation	3	2	2	1	2
Economy	4	3	3	2	1
Town and local centres	1	3	2	2	3

The proposed approach

- 5.1.3 Option 2c was initially selected as the preferred approach because it offered significant positive effects for economic growth and wider benefits for communities, even though it was recognised as carrying some negative environmental implications. It was judged to strike the best balance between competing sustainability considerations. This informed the Initial Draft Local Plan, which was consulted on under Regulation 18 between April and June 2025.
- 5.1.4 Following that consultation, the Council revisited the key planning issues around employment and housing needs and their implications for the Green Belt, and has now identified a new preferred approach, broadly aligned with Option 1.
- 5.1.5 This means deferring decisions on longer term housing and employment land requirements to an early update of the Local Plan, rather than making further strategic allocations now.

- 5.1.6 The Council acknowledges this doesn't immediately address the economic potential identified in the Wigan Economic Market and Employment Land Assessment. However, it reflects the fact that current development requirements are based on the adopted Places for Everyone Plan, while further Greater Manchester wide evidence on future housing and employment needs is still to come. In this context, the Council considers it premature to make additional allocations before there's greater certainty on the scale and distribution of future growth.
- 5.1.7 The appraisal supports this approach, finding no significant adverse effects from deferring these matters, meaning there's little justification for further allocations now, especially when doing so could cause unnecessary impacts or limit future options.
- 5.1.8 Instead, a future update, informed by updated evidence and Greater Manchester wide planning, will allow housing, employment, infrastructure, transport and environmental matters to be considered together at a strategic level. This more integrated approach should help align homes and jobs effectively, avoid piecemeal decisions, and reduce the risk of needing multiple rounds of Green Belt review.

6. Appraisal of the Draft Plan

- 6.1.1 This section presents an appraisal of the Pre Submission Plan considered 'as a whole'. A summary of the effects of the Plan appraisal is set out below.

IA theme	Conclusions
	The housing strategy is largely determined by the PfE, and there is a healthy supply of housing when considering longstanding inclusions in the SHLAA. Therefore, significant effects are unlikely to arise in terms of housing delivery.
Housing	However, the Plan continues support for existing strategic allocations and broad locations, promotes residential markets in town centres, and is likely to improve the quality of housing stock. The Plan also makes provision for specific community groups including gypsies, travellers, travelling show people and children in care. In combination, minor positive effects are predicted to arise.
Health and communities	Several policies in the Plan seek to address health inequalities and safeguard the wellbeing of communities through improvements to health and community infrastructure, open space, nature and through identifying and minimising potential impacts of new development on health and amenity. Overall, a minor positive effect is predicted for health and communities.
Equalities	Some policies seek to address inequalities including through improvements in the provision of social infrastructure, improvements in bus and active transport and improvements in accommodation and services for vulnerable and protected groups including looked after children and gypsies and travellers. Whilst the overall thrust of the Plan is positive with regards to equalities, the significance of effects is limited by the lack of additional planned growth in housing and employment land. Overall, minor positive effects are predicted.
Climate change	With regards to climate change mitigation, the Plan is predicted to have mixed effects. On one hand, the plan promotes the continued strategy for housing development and support for infrastructure. These measures are likely to increase greenhouse gas emissions at construction stage and operationally. However, the Plan is also supportive of low carbon energy schemes, the growth of the green economy and carbon sequestration. On balance, minor positive effects are predicted.

IA theme	Conclusions
Water	In terms of adaptation and resilience, the Plan is very supportive of green and blue infrastructure delivery. Flood risk associated with climate change is unlikely to increase as a result of the plan. Therefore, overall, minor positive effects are predicted with regards to resilience.
	Some of the policy measures and developments supported by the Plan have the potential to increase pressure on water resources (for example recreational pressure from tourism, pollution and surface water changes resulting from employment allocations). However, there are appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures in place, and the likelihood of negative effects arising is considered to be low. Furthermore, the Plan includes a range of measures that seek to enhance the natural environment, which will have secondary benefits for flood management and water quality. Direct positive effects are also likely to arise through a focus on the enhancement of riparian environments, reduction in surface water run off rates from brownfield development, and better management of flood risk in Hindley and Platt Bridge Town centres. Overall, this is considered to constitute minor positive effects in terms of water resources across the Borough.
Environmental quality	A wide range of plan policies are likely to support an improvement in environmental quality as there is an emphasis on improving the public realm, enhancing green / blue infrastructure and promoting sustainable travel. The town centre policies should also have positive effects, but there is a potential for increased traffic that needs to be managed. On balance, potential minor positive effects are predicted overall. Whilst the policy framework has been strengthened with regards to environmental improvement, there are no targeted schemes (or enabling developments) that would help to drive a more significant positive effect.
Historic environment	The Plan focuses on preserving and enhancing town centres across the borough, which is likely to bring about positive effects on settlement character and historic features, particularly where the productive reuse of historic buildings is involved.
	Overall, the Plan is predicted to have minor positive effects as it supports measures that should help to improve settlement character and the historic value of places.

IA theme	Conclusions
Landscape and townscapes	The Plan is predominately positive with regards to townscape and landscape as there is a focus on enhancing green and blue infrastructure, town and local centre improvements and valuing natural environments. In this respect, cumulative moderate positive effects are predicted.
Biodiversity and geodiversity	The Plan identifies biodiversity assets of importance to Wigan and outlines a framework for protection and enhancement that builds upon the PfE policies. In particular, there is a focus on urban greening, enhancement of green and blue infrastructure networks, and recognising the role of nature for the visitor economy. In combination, these policies are predicted to bring about positive effects on biodiversity and help contribute towards a more resilient ecological network in the borough. Taking the above factors into consideration, it is predicted that the net effect on biodiversity as a result of the plan will be positive. In the short term, minor positive effects are predicted, but these ought to increase in the long term as enhancement schemes and net gain projects come to fruition.
Resource efficiency	The quality of new developments will be higher and operationally there should be resource efficiencies. In particular, the standards for water efficiency will be higher, and there is support for the provision of high-quality developments. The Plan also supports growth of the green economy, the use of low carbon energy schemes and the reuse of land and buildings. Together, these measures will have positive effects in terms of resource efficiency. Overall, the positive effects are considered to offset the negatives, and so neutral to minor positive effects are predicted.
Land and soil	The Plan is broadly positive with regards to soil and land resources by promoting the reuse of land and buildings, preserving and enhancing open space and addressing contamination. Though there is continued support for the development of key strategic sites, the principle of development in these locations is well established (or has planning permission) and the effects on land are considered to be part of the 'baseline position'. Therefore, no additional loss of greenfield land is expected as a result of this Plan. Overall, a minor positive effect is predicted.

IA theme	Conclusions
Transportation	The Plan is supportive of sustainable transport networks and active travel enhancements and will require suitable mitigation to address potential negative impacts. There is also support provided to facilitate important transport infrastructure schemes. Overall, minor positive effects are predicted.
Economy	The Plan seeks to protect and enhance existing employment areas, support the vitality and vibrancy of town and local centres, improve transport infrastructure and secure environmental improvements. All these factors have a cost but ultimately should contribute to sustainable economic growth. Positive effects are not likely to be significant overall because, although the evidence identifies opportunities for economic growth, the Plan does not proactively allocate employment land to facilitate their delivery, meaning potential benefits are deferred until a future plan update. A minor negative effect is predicted in relation to the hot food takeaway policy, but this does not detract from the overall minor positive effects.
Town centres	There is a strong focus on sustaining vibrant town and local centres by supporting environmental improvements, facilitating residential markets, making positive use of land and buildings, improving accessibility, promoting visitor activities and protecting heritage and townscape features. There could be some minor negative effects if residents prefer private car trips to access town and local centres. However, this should be offset by an improved sustainable transport offer and residential development in and around the centres. Overall, the Plan policies are predicted to have a moderate positive effect upon town and local centres.

7. Mitigation and Enhancement

7.1 Introduction

- 7.1.1 Given the iterative nature of plan-making, consideration of mitigation and enhancement measures has featured throughout the IA process. This section sets out a summary of how the IA addressed mitigation and enhancement at key stages in the plan-making process.
- 7.1.2 Recommendations have been made based on the findings of the Integrated Assessment and implications for the likely effects of the Plan were seen across all themes of sustainability.

7.2 Options and Preferences

- 7.2.1 The focus at this stage was to provide early engagement with the emerging plan policies and evidence gathering to ensure that sustainability issues are identified and addressed up front. Recommendations were made and reported to the Council in an Interim IA Report prepared in October 2023 in relation to the consultation document prepared at the 'Options and Preferences' stage.

7.3 Employment options

- 7.3.1 The following recommendations were made from integrated appraisal work, recognising that it was still early in the plan-making process and policies and approaches were not finalised. It was intended that these measures would be considered by the Council before the full draft of the Local Plan was prepared. The focus at this stage was on identifying recommendations to address site specific issues. Given that this exercise was undertaken before allocations were proposed, recommendations were intended to influence site selection and corresponding policies. The following measures were suggested to the Council in an internal Interim IA Report.
- Seek to enhance public rights of way at Moss Industrial Estate, which are currently difficult to use in parts.
 - Seek to enhance public transport connections and active transport links to sites within the A580 East Lancashire Road Corridor.
 - Ensure that residential development on the Bridgewater West site is accessible to nearby local services by walking and cycling and are not reliant on private travel to access local services.
 - Celebrate the mining legacy of Astley throughout the wider development of the Bridgewater West site by supporting public art, signage and features that reflect the history of the area.
 - Support access to economic growth sectors to underrepresented groups such as women and disabled people, for example:

- By specifying the need to provide onsite childcare facilities where there is no suitable provision nearby.
- Supporting the highest standards of accessibility and adaptations that support those with disabilities to work at these locations.
- Supporting the development of local skills and training programmes.

7.4 Initial draft plan

- 7.4.1 The table below sets out the recommendations made in response to the appraisal of the initial draft Plan policies. The Council's response is provided for each recommendation. In some cases, the Council amended policies accordingly, whereas in others, it considered that no further action was necessary.

Table 7-1: Recommendations at Initial draft plan stage

Recommendation	Council response
Flood risk management is mentioned explicitly for Platt Bridge but there is flooding risk in all the town centres to varying extents. It would be useful to require / encourage (where possible) surface water management in all the town centres.	Specific mention is given to Platt Bridge as it is a significant issue in this location. General flood policies are considered sufficient to deal with flood risk in other centres.
Some town centre policies mention urban greening, others don't. It would be beneficial to promote / support such approaches across the board in town centres.	Urban greening is specifically mentioned in town centre policies where there is a particular need for intervention to address deficits. As such, inclusion in all town centre policies is not considered necessary.
Some town centre policies state the need to address the environs behind main shopping streets, whilst others don't. Most of the town centres have poor quality environs behind shops / main streets that could be improved.	This is only specifically addressed in town centre policies where there is considered to be an issue that needs to be addressed. As such, it is not considered appropriate to include in all town centre policies.
Policy J8 clause D highlights some of the key cultural assets in Wigan. The Old Courts is considered to be an important community asset that should be added to this policy.	Agree. The Old Courts has been added to Policy J8, now J4.

Recommendation	Council response
The self-build and custom build housing policy would benefit from a more objective target underpinned by evidence.	The policy has been amended to make specific reference to the Self Build Register.
Policy EN4, clearly prioritises on site net gain in a hierarchy of interventions. This helps to ensure that biodiversity value in development locations does not decrease. However, it could potentially prevent solutions that would offer a greater amount of net gain from being implemented. Consider adding the following wording. Off-site alternatives will only be considered where it can be demonstrated that Biodiversity Net Gain, that contributes to the green infrastructure network, cannot be practically and/or feasibly achieved within the site boundary <u>(or it is demonstrable that a higher amount of net gain could be achieved off-site more effectively)</u>	The policy has been amended as considered appropriate.
For Winwick Lane Policy J6 - it is recommended that the policy refers to the need to protect the amenity of standalone and small clusters of homes which could potentially be adversely affected by transported related air pollution.	The Council considered that this would be suitably dealt with through Policy EN6, now EN7. NB: The site is not proposed for allocation in the latest version of the Plan.
There are discrepancies between the employment site allocation policies on improvements to walking, wheeling and cycling. Policy J3 performs best by seeking improvements to walking, wheeling and cycling access. Policies J5 and J6 seek improvements to walking and cycling access only.	Policies J4, J5 and J6 amended to include 'walking, wheeling and cycling' (as per Policy J3). NB: The plan no longer proposes to allocate any employment sites.
For the Bridgewater West allocation policy, it would be beneficial to explore how 'investment' can support efforts to maintain the winding tower (which is a heritage asset identified as 'at risk').	Investment in the mining museum is mentioned in Policy J5 but does not include detail on maintaining the winding tower.

Recommendation	Council response
	NB: The plan no longer proposes to allocate any employment sites.

7.5 Regulation 19 Local Plan

- 7.5.1 Following consultation on the initial draft Plan, the Council has made focused changes to policies. The integrated assessment has been updated to take account of these changes (including further consideration of mitigation and enhancement measures).
- 7.5.2 At this stage, no further measures have been identified as the changes made to policies do not lead to significant negative effects.

8. Monitoring and Next Steps

8.1 Monitoring

- 8.1.1 There is a requirement to outline the measures envisaged to monitor the predicted effects of a Plan. The Regulations suggest that there is a need to focus on the significant effects that are identified (rather than all effects).
- 8.1.2 It is important to identify monitoring measures that are appropriate, which includes consideration of the practicality of collecting data. In this regard, it is important to consider existing monitoring regimes that cover similar topics and issues.
- 8.1.3 The Local Plan is accompanied by a set of monitoring measures and there are also indicators and targets within related strategies and plans across Greater Manchester such as the Places for Everyone Plan and the Five-Year Environment Plan. To avoid duplication, existing sources of monitoring indicators have been used first. New indicators are proposed only when needed to complement current measures.

8.2 Next steps

- 8.2.1 This IA Report will be consulted upon with the statutory bodies and wider stakeholders alongside the Pre-Submission version of the Local Plan under Regulation 19.
- 8.2.2 Any comments received will be reviewed and then taken into account prior to the Plan being submitted for examination.

