Wigan Council

Wigan Borough Local Plan

Site Allocation Assessment Report 1: North Leigh Park

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Note of changes made since the August 2026 version of this document:

Section	
1.5	Update to cover consultation on the Publication version
2.3, 5.1	Factual updates

1. Background

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This is one of 6 site allocation assessment reports, each one relating directly to one of the 6 site allocations in the Draft Wigan Borough Local Plan. This is Site Allocation Assessment Report 1 on North Leigh Park.

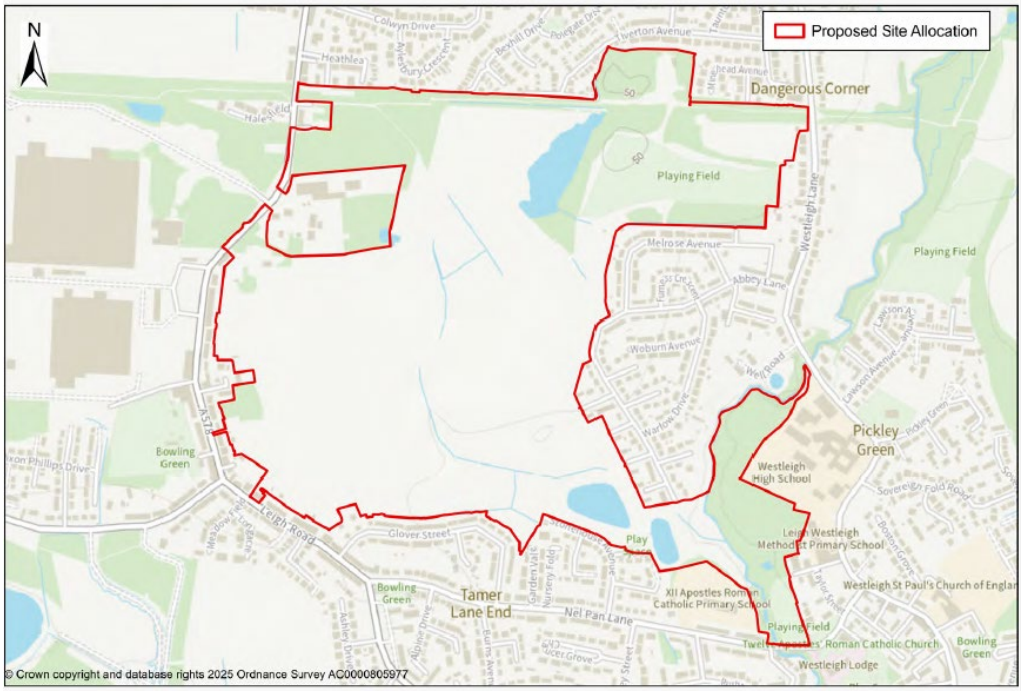
1.1.2 The site allocation assessment reports distil the evidence base that has been collated and, where applicable, commissioned to support the site allocation, and set out the key messages to help demonstrate that the site is justified, appropriate, deliverable and effective, against national planning policy and relevant strategic planning policies.

1.1.3 The 6 reports need to be read alongside the 7 Topic Papers and the self-assessment toolkit reports. For more detailed information reference should be made to the source reports and studies.

1.2 Site details

1.2.1 With a site area of around 65 hectares, North Leigh Park is a key brownfield site in the borough that has been despoiled by previous activities including coal mining, quarrying, tipping and sewage treatment. It has been partly reclaimed by nature and areas are used informally for dog walking and other activities, but it is of limited economic and social value relative to its potential.

1.2.2 The site allocation boundary is shown below:



1.3 Proposed development

1.3.1 The remaining land at North Leigh Park is allocated for residential development comprising around 1,500 homes with an appropriate mix of types, sizes and tenures, including affordable housing, delivered through a partnerships model, to help address local needs.

1.3.2 The development will also include a new local centre comprising a range of commercial uses and community facilities to serve the new homes and existing residents in Westleigh, Pickley Green, and the eastern end of Hindley Green, and the delivery of a link road from the A578 Leigh Road to the A579 Atherleigh Way.

1.3.3 The proposed allocation will contribute positively towards meeting the spatial strategy in the Places for Everyone (PfE) Plan of boosting northern competitiveness and facilitating the effective delivery of NorthFold (PfE policy JP-Strat8: Wigan-Bolton Growth Corridor), within which the site is located.

1.3.4 The site is included in the Government's New Homes Accelerator Programme, which is an initiative aiming to unblock and accelerate the delivery of large-scale housing developments that have, for various reasons, become delayed or stalled.

1.4 Planning history

1.4.1 In September 2013, the site was allocated in the Local Plan Core Strategy (Policy SP3) as a key strategic site for a comprehensive residential led development comprising housing, employment, a local centre and a link road from A579 Atherleigh Way to A578 Leigh Road. The allocation of this site in the Local Plan will replace the Core Strategy policy and its key strategic site designation.

1.4.2 Prior to the adoption of the Core Strategy, but in accordance with its emerging site allocation policy, the site was granted outline planning permission (A/12/76665) in February 2013, including for up to 1,800 homes.

1.4.3 Pursuant to the outline approval, subsequent reserved matters approvals have been approved for:

- 199 homes on a parcel to the south off Nel Pan Lane (A/19/86980/RMMAJ), approved September 2019
- 257 homes across three parcels in the northeast of the allocation (A/20/88859/RMMAJ), approved January 2021

1.4.4 In addition, 99 homes were granted full permission on a parcel to the north off Corner Lane (A17/83509/MAJOR), and a further 250 homes

were granted full permission in April 2021, as part of a hybrid application which granted outline planning permission for a Local Centre, on land in the north-west of the allocation (A/20/888490).

1.4.5 Of these 805 homes with full or reserved matters approval, only 186 homes have been built, including the 99 homes off Corner Lane (Bellway Homes) and 87 of the homes off Nel Pan Lane (Great Places – all affordable homes). 112 homes off Nel Pan Lane remain unbuilt.

1.4.6 In February 2026 a reserved matters application (A/26/100520/RMMAJ) was received by the Council for 1,491 homes, covering the remaining undeveloped land at the site covered by the original outline planning application.

1.4.7 The proposed site allocation covers the area now covered by the, yet to be determined, reserved matters planning application.

1.5 Summary of consultation responses

1.5.1 Comments were received in response to the proposed allocation in the Initial Draft Local Plan from 14 respondents including National Highways, Sport England, United Utilities, the Coal Authority, Transport for Greater Manchester, Jo Platt MP and the site promoter Vistry Group Ltd.

1.5.2 A summary of the comments received, and the council's response, can be viewed in the Consultation Report. In summary, there is broad support for the site from a number of statutory bodies with some amendments suggested to strengthen the policy in terms of managing its impact on the natural environment, on existing sport provision, and in relation to infrastructure delivery.

1.5.3 Comments were received from 16 respondents in response to the allocation in the Publication and Submission version of the plan in Autumn 2026, including Sport England, United Utilities, NHS Property Services, the site promoter Vistry Group Ltd and 11 residents.

1.6 Integrated assessment

1.6.1 The broad implications of policy H3 North Leigh Park were assessed as part of the Integrated Assessment (IA) process. The policy was considered to have broadly positive implications in relation to housing, health and community, equality and diversity, water, environment quality, biodiversity / geodiversity, transport and economy. The implications in terms of climate change, historic environment, landscape / townscape, resource efficiency, land and soil, and town centres, were considered to be broadly neutral. No broadly negative implications were identified.

2. Physical assessment

2.1 Transport

2.1.1 The outline planning application (A/12/76665) was accompanied by a Transport Assessment to fully understand the transport implications of the proposal.

2.1.2 The number of trips generated by the development was based on the TRICS database for surveys of similar sites. In total, the development was forecast to generate 995 two-way trips during the AM peak period and 1,013 two-way trips during the PM peak period.

2.1.3 The distribution of trips onto the highway network was agreed with the Greater Manchester Transportation Unit (now known as the Greater Manchester Highways Forecasting and Analytical Services). This determined that the following junctions in the vicinity of the site are likely to be impacted by development traffic:

- Atherton Road / Swan Lane
- Atherton Road / Leigh Road
- Corner Lane / Smallbrook Lane / Westleigh Lane
- Wigan Road / Schofield Lane / Lovers Lane
- Atherleigh Way / Lovers Lane
- Westleigh Lane / Nel Pan Lane
- Leigh Road / Wigan Road / Nel Pan Lane
- Leigh Road / Smith's Lane
- Leigh Road Site Access
- Westleigh Lane Site Access

2.1.4 The traffic impact assessment highlights that to accommodate the development traffic, the following range of improvements to the highway network are required:

Phase 1a:

- **A new site access junction at Westleigh Lane:** A three-arm priority junction designed to have sufficient capacity to serve the proposed development within both phase 1a and 1b. To future-proof the junction, the initial construction of the junction includes all physical works that will be required to accommodate phase 2, including the provision of a stub for the link road to Atherleigh Way.

- **A package of measures to promote the use of Coupland Road:** A series of mitigation measures are proposed to discourage traffic from using this route and instead use Coupland Road as an alternative route. To achieve this, traffic calming is proposed for Swan Lane in addition to directional signing of the preferred route. It is also proposed to declassify Swan Lane, which is currently a C classified road.
- **Junction improvements at Westleigh Lane / Corner Lane:** Signalisation of the junction is required to accommodate the traffic generated by phase 1a of the development. A further improvement to include a separate left-turn lane into Westleigh Lane is required to facilitate the development of phase 1b and the remainder of the site in phase 2.

Phase 1b:

- **A new site access junction at Leigh Road:** A roundabout junction is required to serve the full build out of all phases of development without the need for further works.
- **Leigh Road to Westleigh Lane Connection:** A new link road will be created through the site. As well as providing access to the development, this new section of adopted highway will create a new east-west link through the area. This will assist in reducing traffic flows on the existing routes (A577 and Nel Pan Lane) and a phase of the wider Wigan-Bolton East-West Strategic Route.
- **Junction improvements at Smith's Lane / Leigh Road:** This includes widening along Leigh Road to provide separate right and left turn lanes into Smiths Lane. This improvement will provide sufficient capacity for the full development build out.

Phase 2:

- **Signalisation of the Westleigh Lane site access:** The additional traffic generated by the development of Phase 2 and the additional traffic movements introduced by the new link road will require traffic signals to be introduced at this junction.
- **New link road from Westleigh Lane to Atherleigh Way:** A new link road will be provided to form an east-west link. This will provide relief to several junctions that are forecast to operate with significant levels of congestion in the base scenarios without development at North Leigh Park.
- **A new junction at Atherleigh Way / Lover's Lane:** The new link road will connect to Atherleigh Way at the junction with Lover's

Lane. The new junction will result in the closure of the northern section of Lovers Lane to through traffic to create a create a four-arm crossroads.

2.1.5 Walking, wheeling and cycling movements to, from and within the site have been considered in the design of the scheme. Pedestrian facilities are provided at key junctions within the area and key routes to and from the area have been designed to prioritise walking and wheeling connectivity and flow. Cycle access to the area has also been considered and appropriate facilities will be provided within the scheme as part of the travel plan.

2.1.6 Public transport accessibility of the site has been assessed and is of a high quality in terms of bus services. The link road through the heart of the site has been designed to accommodate buses and new bus stops will be provided close to the local centre to serve the development.

2.1.7 The Wigan-Bolton East-West Strategic Route, between the M6 and the M61 motorways, is a longstanding strategic priority for the borough, due to the capacity limitations of the A577 and A58 route. This new route would form the infrastructure spine for NorthFold.

2.1.8 The North Leigh Park development will deliver the section of the Wigan-Bolton East-West Strategic Route from the A578 Leigh Road to the A579 Atherleigh Way.

2.1.9 On this basis, it is concluded that the proposed development would comply with paragraphs 109 to 118 of the NPPF, which requires that safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all road users and that any significant impacts from the development on the transport network in terms of capacity and congestion, or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree through a vision-led approach.

2.2 Flood risk and drainage

2.2.1 Given the prior planning applications and subsequent approvals there have been numerous flood risk assessments produced with regards to this proposed site allocation.

Outline Planning Application A/12/76665

2.2.2 The flood risk assessment identifies that most of the site lies within Flood Zone 1 (low risk), with some areas in Flood Zones 2 and 3. The masterplan applied the sequential test, locating all residential and commercial development in low-risk areas, while open space and ecological uses are placed in higher-risk zones.

2.2.3 Surface water management was a key focus. The proposed drainage strategy limited runoff to greenfield rates using a combination of SuDS features such as swales, ponds, underground tanks, and oversized pipes. The strategy also includes phased delivery aligned with site remediation and construction.

2.2.4 Residual risks from groundwater and sewer flooding were considered low, though the Hindley Relief Trunk Sewer and track drainage system require further investigation and potential upgrades. Overall, the flood risk assessment concluded that the development could proceed safely without increasing flood risk elsewhere and aligned with national planning policy (PPS25) at the time.

Reserved Matters Application A/19/86980

2.2.5 This application covers the first phase of development under outline planning permission A/12/76665 (as amended by NMA ref: A/19/76665/NMAS) for the erection of 199 dwellings, internal access roads, public open space and other associated works.

2.2.6 This application was submitted with a full drainage strategy for this phase of development which was considered by the Council's Drainage Engineer, United Utilities and the Environment Agency. All were satisfied with the details and raised no objections to the first phase of development, which was subsequently implemented.

Hybrid Application A/20/88849 and Reserved Matters A/20/88859

2.2.7 The boundaries of these two applications adjoin each other, and together the two applications would form a single large phase of development, known as Phase 1B. This consisted of:

- A hybrid application for:
    - Full planning permission for the erection of 250 dwellings and a link road from Leigh Road to Atherleigh Way together with associated works including junction and highway works, internal access roads, car parking, landscaping, a substation and associated engineering operations (the total number of dwellings on the wider North Leigh Park strategic site will not exceed 1,800 dwellings); and,
    - Outline planning permission for a local centre A1, A2, A3, A4, A5 and/or D1 uses and other associated works seeking approval of access. All other matters reserved.
- A reserved matters application for:

- Approval of reserved matters, namely layout, scale, appearance, and landscaping pursuant to condition 2 attached to outline planning permission A/12/76665 (as amended) for the erection of 257 dwellings, internal access roads, public open space, a substation, and other associated works.

2.2.8 A flood risk assessment was submitted for phase 1B in support of both applications.

2.2.9 A drainage strategy was submitted that concluded that there were no known infrastructure impediments to development on the site, subject to the scheme being designed in a manner which incorporated arrangements to secure sustainable drainage on the site and to mitigate any impact on the existing drainage infrastructure. The Environment Agency and United Utilities raised no objections, subject to these measures being provided as per a condition that was applied to the approval.

2.2.10 With regards to the 2026 reserved matters application a refreshed flood risk assessment has been submitted.

2.2.11 In summary, flood risk and drainage have been consistently considered throughout previous planning application approvals and within the current 2026 application, and there are no outstanding issues regarding flood risk.

2.3 Ground conditions

2.3.1 North Leigh Park comprises scrub land, colliery spoil mounds, mine entries, closed historic landfill sites and nominated landfill sites. There are a range of geotechnical and contamination related constraints to its redevelopment associated with historic quarrying, landfilling, opencast coal extraction, tipping of colliery spoil mounds, below ground shallow coal mining activities and former industrial uses. There are therefore significant variations in ground elevations across the site understood to be as a result of the historical quarrying, mining, and subsequent filling and placement of materials.

2.3.2 The site has been subject to a significant number of ground investigations over the years, associated with the planning applications on site, which have identified various levels of contamination and ground gas issues that require remediation. All this needs to be addressed in a comprehensive way through a remediation strategy if the site is to be delivered.

2.3.3 The key issue at the site and the overriding need for backing from the New Homes Accelerator is in the regulatory support (and the timetables around this happening) needed to agree a comprehensive remediation strategy, methodology and appropriate permitting with key stakeholders (Environment Agency) in order to discharge conditions and commence significant works on site.

2.3.4 The critical requirement is coordination between the land remediation and environmental permitting functions within the Environment Agency to be aligned to a master programme timetable that all stakeholders are working to.

2.3.5 Pursuant to this, in summer 2025, Vistry moved ahead with the final testing of the landfills at the site, with the results having recently been compiled. This testing is required to fully understand what is in the landfill and the spread and depth of the waste and what development "off set distances" are required at the site, alongside capping and venting measures – in accordance with a remediation strategy.

2.3.6 Subsequently, Vistry are meeting with the Environment Agency to plan a way forward and using the powers of the New Homes Accelerator are looking to expedite this process and the conversations necessary to address the 2026 reserved matters application.

2.3.7 Further testing of the ground conditions and mine shaft entries across the site have taken place in 2026 to further inform the remediation strategy, and discussions are now actively taking place between the relevant stakeholders to ensure that the scheme moves forward, using New Homes Accelerator powers.

2.4 Utilities

2.4.1 The following sets out how utilities infrastructure will be dealt with and provided for on site.

Electricity

2.4.2 Leigh has 3 primary substations. SP Electricity North West (SP-ENW) has advised there is capacity to serve existing demand and that an intervention has been identified for the Bedford primary sub-station to meet future demand that will arise due to housing and other development. The developer will need to agree with SP-ENW all works to connect the site to the electricity network, and agree any diversions and works that maybe necessary to existing electrical infrastructure that may be present on the site or adjacent to it.

Gas

2.4.3 The developer of the site will need to liaise with National Grid on any major gas assets that cross, or are adjacent to, the site and take reference of any easements associated with these assets. For connections to the mains gas network, Cadent should be consulted regarding capacity and location of suitable connections and associated land requirements for access to, and servicing of, new gas supplies.

Clean Water

2.4.4 The delivery of clean water to the site will need to be agreed with United Utilities. This will include identification and supply from the mains, and an assessment of any re-enforcement works to ensure that supply is maintained in the locality. All works will need to be co-ordinated with United Utilities.

Sewers

2.4.5 A comprehensive drainage strategy will be required and agreed with United Utilities. This will be implemented in phases as the site is developed. As part of the drainage strategy, a capacity check enquiry will confirm the capability of the existing sewerage infrastructure to accommodate the proposed flow from the development. If there is insufficient capacity, strategic reinforcement works by United Utilities will be needed. United Utilities would also have an obligation under Section 94 of the Water Industry Act 1991 to provide a connection and capacity for the sewer network, and when this is taken into consideration.

Telecommunications and digital infrastructure

2.4.6 Provision of telecommunications and digital infrastructure will be co-ordinated with Open Reach and other suppliers. Where there is existing infrastructure such as overhead and underground cables, any disconnections and diversions will be agreed with the service provider to minimise disruption.

3. Environmental assessment

3.1 Recreation

3.1.1 The Wigan Borough Open Space Report (2025) identifies two areas of open space within the site allocation boundary: amenity greenspace adjacent to 66 Nel Pan Lane to the south of the site and Melrose playing field in the northeast, rated good and average quality respectively.

3.1.2 The Open Space Report observes that Leigh Central and Higher Folds is deficient in all open space typologies, most notably parks and gardens (-0.72 hectares per 1,000 population –no provision) and natural / semi-natural green space (-0.54 hectares per 1,000 population).

3.1.3 The Wigan Borough Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy (PPOSS) – Strategy and Action Plan Report (September 2025) provides a number of scenarios as a guide to show the potential additional demand for pitch sports that could be generated from housing growth in Wigan Borough, including for each of the proposed site allocations.

3.1.4 Assuming an occupancy rating of 2.44 people per household (based on a national average), the PPOSS Strategy and Action Plan estimates that a development of 1,400 homes at North Leigh Park would generate an additional 3,416 people, which would equate to an additional demand for 5.81 pitches.

3.1.5 To mitigate the loss of existing playing pitches on the North Leigh Park site, planning permission has been granted for the creation of a full-size natural turf football pitch and the extension of an existing car park to provide 25 additional spaces at Howe Bridge Leisure Centre. A financial contribution has also been made for improvements to local pitches.

3.1.6 Criterion 6 of proposed policy H3 requires the development to provide a strategic green infrastructure network, including, as necessary, provision for open space, trees or woodland, flood mitigation and wildlife habitat.

3.1.7 Informed by this evidence, and relevant existing planning permissions, the development will need to contribute accordingly to meeting the needs of open space, sport and recreation provision in the locality in accordance with proposed Policy PE5.

3.2 Landscape

3.2.1 The North Leigh Park allocation is not identified within the Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment as the site had already been granted outline planning permission when the study was undertaken in 2018.

3.2.2 The Wigan Landscape Character Assessment (2009) identified the landscape character type as degraded and restored landscape given its heavily disturbed history of quarrying, coal mining and tipping. The site was subject to landscape and visual impact assessment as part of the supporting environmental impact assessment for the outline consent which concluded that "the proposed mixed-use development will form a positive addition to the proposal site and will in general have a positive effect upon the landscape and negligible effects upon the visual amenity of the area."

3.3 Ecology and biodiversity

3.3.1 The site has been subject to numerous ecological surveys and assessments throughout its planning history. An Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA), following guidelines from the Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (IEEM), was undertaken as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment for the outline planning permission. Overall, this concluded that the residual impacts of the proposed development would be of minor to moderate levels with some beneficial impacts from habitat enhancement and green infrastructure and habitat creation. The proposed allocation is not within an Impact Risk Zone for Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

3.3.2 Where Westleigh Brook passes through the east of the site it is within the Nature Network as identified in the Greater Manchester Local Nature Recovery Strategy with priority actions for rivers. There are, however, no areas outside the river channel itself.

3.3.3 Subsequent ecological surveys and assessment have been undertaken for permitted reserved matters applications and there have been no concerns raised over the development proposals by Natural England. GMEU are consultees on all ecological matters in the development management process and were also content with the plans and their recommendations. A licence has already been granted to the developer by Natural England to begin the process of relocating the newts from the North Leigh Park site to a nearby site in Pickley Green.

3.4 Habitats Regulation Assessment

3.4.1 The proposed site allocation has been considered in the Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) carried out by the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit. The key recommendations and mitigations suggested in the HRA are to apply the Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (2025) to all relevant allocations to mitigate traffic-related nitrogen oxide pollution and ensure that collaboration takes place with United Utilities to ensure wastewater treatment capacity keeps pace with development. The HRA also concludes that the local plan contains many policies which are designed to reduce or eliminate risks to European sites by embedding environmental safeguards, in particular policies EN1-3, EN5-7 and EN10-13.

3.5 Historic Environment Assessment

3.5.1 The effect of the proposed development upon heritage assets was assessed as part of the approved outline planning application for the development of the site. The assessment confirmed that there were no Listed Buildings or Scheduled Monuments present within the assessment area. It did identify the remains of Park Farm Brickworks, which would need further archaeological evaluation to be carried out at detailed planning stage, and it also identified a disused railway embankment that would need to be subject to an archaeological watching brief during construction.

3.5.2 The Greater Manchester Archaeology Advisory Service (GMAAS) provided comments on the site in 2025. They confirmed that the site does not contain any designated heritage assets or any known archaeological remains of national importance that would merit preservation in-situ, although there are several sites of local archaeological interest across the area recorded on the Historic Environment Record. These include the sites of former farms, numerous coal pits, collieries and two brick works. Physical evidence may survive below ground and would merit further investigation in advance of any future development.

3.5.3 GMAAS recommend that intrusive archaeological investigation should be undertaken in advance of development, ideally prior to the submission of any future planning application, in line with the guidance provided by the National Planning Policy Framework, but it could otherwise be secured as a condition to future planning consent.

3.6 Air quality

3.6.1 The air quality assessment undertaken in support of the previous planning applications for the site identified that air quality is not a constraint to the proposed development, subject to appropriate design layout and mitigation measures.

3.6.2 An air quality assessment has been submitted with application A/26/100520, which concludes that the site is considered suitable for the proposed use from an air quality perspective, subject to appropriate dust control measures at construction stage.

3.7 Noise

3.7.1 A baseline noise assessment was undertaken to support the outline planning application (A/12/76665) and noise assessments were submitted for subsequent applications on the site. In summary, it was considered that the development would not be unduly affected by the existing noise climate and that proposed layouts would provide an acceptable level of amenity for future residents, subject to any necessary mitigation.

3.7.2 A noise assessment and noise impact addendum have been submitted with application A/26/100520 to provide an assessment of the impact of environmental sound on the proposed development.

4. Social assessment

4.1 Access to local shops and services

4.1.1 The review of local centres found that the area of West Leigh and Pickley Green has a gap in provision, as set out in proposed policy TC13. Though there are locations with provision, this is limited to single shops, or two or three shops, which is below the threshold that has been used to identify local centres. An opportunity therefore exists in this location to provide a new local centre with a convenience offer and other small shops and service provision.

4.2 Education and skills

4.2.1 Criterion 10 of the site allocation policy requires the development to provide, or contribute towards the provision of, the infrastructure needed to support it, including for education in accordance with policy PE6. The level of contribution required, and whether it is for on-site or off-site provision, will be determined at the planning application stage based on evidence of need at that time.

4.2.2 In line with PfE Plan policy JP-J1(F), the development will also need to address the requirements for local training and employment as part of the construction phase.

4.3 Health

4.3.1 As with education, criterion 10 also requires the development to provide, or contribute towards the provision of health and care, as appropriate in accordance with proposed policy PE6. The level of contribution required, and whether it is for on-site or off-site provision, will be determined at the planning application stage based on evidence of need at that time.

4.3.2 Future planning applications on the site will also need to be supported, where appropriate, by a Health Impact Assessment in accordance with PfE Plan policy JP-P6 and proposed policy PE1.

4.3.3 A Health Impact Assessment will help ensure that the effects of development on both health and wellbeing are considered and responded to during the planning process. They should aim to enhance the potential positive aspects of a proposal while avoiding or minimising any negative impacts, with particular emphasis on disadvantaged sections of communities that may be affected. This is detailed in the council's Planning for Health Supplementary Planning Document.

5. Deliverability

5.1 Viability

5.1.1 AspinallVerdi has undertaken a borough-wide high-level viability assessment using broad, non-site-specific assumptions. The assessment identifies value zones, based on ward boundaries and uses specific site (e.g. greenfield / brownfield / Green Belt) and scheme typologies (e.g. number of units, flats etc.) to appraise sites.

5.1.2 North Leigh Park is a large brownfield site that crosses ward boundaries. Part of the site is located in Leigh West, which the viability assessment identifies as a low-medium value zone, and part of the site is located in Hindley Green, which is identified as a medium – high value zone. In both these zones, the assessment indicates that large-scale brownfield housing schemes may face significant viability challenges to deliver policy compliant development, but that this is subject to factors such as changes in the housing market and proactive interventions that may be taken to support the delivery of affordable and other housing. There are variations in value within individual wards and site-specific factors and costs vary. Therefore, significant variation from this high-level work should be expected.

5.1.3 North Leigh Park is subject to a number of geotechnical and contamination related constraints to its redevelopment, which need to be addressed in a comprehensive way through a remediation strategy to ensure the delivery of the site. Therefore, the site was submitted by the council for support from the New Homes Accelerator in Autumn 2024 as it had stalled post the completion of 87 homes for Great Places Housing Association in 2023. In August 2025 North Leigh Park was announced as being part of the next tranche of sites to be part of the New Homes Accelerator programme.

5.1.4 The New Homes Accelerator initiative is a collaboration between the Government, Homes England, local authorities, developers and other key public sector stakeholders. It aims to identify and rectify any regulatory hurdles to development and provide targeted solutions by leveraging government resources and through collaboration with other government and regulatory bodies, such as the Environment Agency.

5.1.5 Homes England and Countryside Properties, part of Vistry Group plc, have signed a long-term investment joint venture to leverage the

investments made by them to accelerate the development of large sites across England, such as North Leigh Park.

5.1.6 Further testing of the landfills, mineshafts and ground conditions took place over the summer in 2025 and into 2026 and discussions are now actively taking place between the relevant stakeholders to ensure that the scheme moves forward, using New Homes Accelerator powers.

5.1.7 Viability matters are being considered as part of the 2026 reserved matters application process. Notwithstanding this, the applicant states that a minimum of 50% of the new homes will be delivered by partners including registered providers and private rented sector providers. This could include working directly with a registered provider to deliver 50% of the homes as affordable. They state that they are committed to continuing to deliver a mix of affordable and other tenures through alternative funding streams, such as grant funding from Homes England.

5.2 Phasing

5.2.1 Work is taking place to move this scheme forward, with further site remediation having taken place in 2026.

5.2.2 This is a large site and will be delivered in phases, delivering a mix of housing types and tenures, including a significant proportion of affordable housing, delivered through Vistry's partnerships model, where around 50% of homes are envisaged as being for an affordable tenure.

5.2.3 In accordance with the draft development programme that has been produced for the site by the site promoter, homes are considered deliverable on phase 1A2 (112 units) in the south of the site and on phase 1BNW (252 units) in the north-west of the site within the five-year period 2025–2030.

5.2.4 The remainder of the units on phases 1BNE (257 units) and phase 2 (around 870 units) are considered developable within the plan period.

5.2.5 Delivery of the new road link between Leigh Road and Atherleigh Way is a priority, and it impacts upon the phasing of the development. It is secured through the conditions attached to the outline permission (A/12/76665) and associated legal agreement.

5.2.6 Condition 4 requires that no more than 400 dwellings are constructed before a detailed specification for the construction of a road between Leigh Road and Westleigh Lane, and for a highway

improvement at the Leigh Road / Smiths Lane junction are submitted to and approved by the council and the works completed in accordance with the approved details.

5.2.7 The condition also requires that no more than 751 dwellings are constructed before a detailed specification for the construction of a road between Westleigh Lane and Atherleigh Way has been submitted to and approved by the Council and the works completed in accordance with the approved details.

5.3 Indicative concept plan

5.3.1 A concept plan prepared by the council is included below. This provides a spatial representation of the allocation policy and shows an indicative layout of the potential development of the site, including a link road from A578 Leigh Road to Westleigh Lane and onwards towards the A579 Atherleigh Way, around 1,500 homes, a new local centre and strategic green infrastructure.

