Wigan Borough Local Plan

Topic Paper 2: Homes

Author: Strategic Planning

Date: November 2026

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

Section	
3.1.15 – 3.1.23	Factual updates
3.1.25 – 3.1.26	Text setting out the position in terms of small sites
3.1.29 – 3.1.34	Text providing information about the role of the Council's Housing Enabling and Development Team
3.1.36 - 3.1.37	Factual updates

1. Introduction

1.1.1 This is one of 7 Topic Papers each one relating directly to one of the 7 policy chapters in the Draft Wigan Borough Local Plan. This is Topic Paper 2 on Homes.

1.1.2 The topic papers distil the evidence base that has been collated and, where applicable, commissioned to support the Local Plan, and set out the key messages to help demonstrate that the plan meets the tests of soundness in a proportionate way, specifically that it has been positively prepared, is justified and appropriate, is deliverable and effective, and is consistent with national policy and relevant strategic policies for the area, as set out in paragraphs 35 and 36 of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023).

1.1.3 It starts with the planning policy context for Homes and identifies the policy requirements for the Local Plan to address, before focusing on more depth of each of those policy requirements. This includes reference to proposed site allocations for Homes in the Local Plan, but they are primarily covered in separate Site Allocation Assessment Reports for each site.

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

2. The planning policy context for Homes

2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework

2.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was updated in August 2026. However, the Local Plan is being reviewed against the NPPF December 2023 version due to a criterion within the transitional arrangements surrounding the Places for Everyone plan.

2.1.2 Where relevant, material consideration has been given to the December 2024 version of the NPPF when preparing the Homes policies outlined in Section 3, particularly where the changes made relate primarily to development management. The August 2026 version was published too late to be considered in our topic papers, or to inform content in the Local Plan.

2.1.3 National planning policy on Homes is set out primarily in sections 5 and 11 of the NPPF (December 2023) - 'Delivering a sufficient supply of homes' and 'Making effective use of land'. National planning policy on traveller sites is set out in Planning policy for traveller sites.

2.1.4 The NPPF raises a number of policy requirements and challenges for Local Plans as set out in the Local Plan Route Mapper Toolkit Part 2: Local Plan Form and Content Checklist from the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) (May 2025). As the PAS Toolkit is based on the December 2024 version of the NPPF, the council has revised it to align with the December 2023 version against which the Local Plan will be examined. With numbering from the revised toolkit, these policy requirements and challenges are that Local Plans should:

14. Be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance. The outcome of the standard method is an advisory starting-point for establishing a housing requirement for the area.

    Any housing needs which cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account when establishing the amount of housing to be planned for within the plan.

15. Identify the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups.

16. Where a need for affordable housing is identified, specify the type of affordable housing required.

17. Where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed, expect at least 10% of the total number of homes to be available for affordable home ownership, unless this would exceed the level of affordable housing required in the area, or significantly prejudice the ability to meet the identified affordable housing needs of specific groups.

18. Set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations.

19. Identify a supply of specific, deliverable sites for five years following the intended date of adoption, and specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15 of the remaining plan period.

20. Promote the development of a good mix of sites and:
    a. Identify land to accommodate at least 10% of the housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare; unless it can be demonstrated that there are strong reasons why the 10% target cannot be achieved.
    b. Seek opportunities to support small sites to come forward for community-led development for housing and self-build and custom build housing.
    c. Use tools such as area-wide design assessments, permission in principle and Local Development Order
    d. Support the development of windfall sites
    e. Encourage the sub-division of large sites where this could help to speed up the delivery of homes

21. Support the development of exception sites for community-led development on sites that would not otherwise be suitable as rural exception sites.

22. Support the supply of homes through utilising masterplans, design guides and codes where appropriate to support larger scale developments.

23 Include a trajectory illustrating the expected rate of housing delivery over the plan period, and all plans should consider

whether it is appropriate to set out the anticipated rate of development for specific sites

24. Be responsive to local circumstances and support rural housing developments that reflect local needs.

25. Identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services.

26. Avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless specific circumstances are consistent with those set out in the NPPF.

69. Promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.

70 Set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously developed or 'brownfield' land.

71. Encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains.

72. Recognise that some undeveloped land can perform many functions, such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, cooling/shading, carbon storage or food production.

73. Give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land.

74. Promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings.

75 Support opportunities to use the airspace above existing residential and commercial premises for new homes.

76. Reflect changes in the demand for land.

77. Support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account the need for different types of housing and other

forms of development, local market conditions, the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services, the character and setting of the area, and the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.

78. Area-based character assessments, design guides, design codes and masterplans are appropriate tools to use to help to ensure land is used efficiently while also creating well designed and sustainable places.

79. Avoid homes being built at low densities where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of identified housing needs, and where appropriate include the use of minimum density standards.

2.1.5 We are publishing the revised version of the Local Plan Route Mapper Toolkit Part 2: Local Plan Form and Content Checklist with our response to each of these requirements separately. The remainder of this section in this Topic Paper sets out what the policy requirements are for Homes in the Wigan Borough Local Plan, including the extent that, given it will sit alongside the Places for Everyone Plan, it needs to meet the requirements in the NPPF.

Planning policy for traveller sites

2.1.6 This policy document sets out the Government's planning policy for traveller sites. It should be read in conjunction with the NPPF.

2.1.7 The Government's aims in respect of traveller sites include:

- that local planning authorities should make their own assessment of need for the purposes of planning.
- ensuring that local planning authorities, working collaboratively, develop fair and effective strategies to meet need through the identification of land for sites.
- encouraging local planning authorities to plan for sites over a reasonable timescale.
- that plan-making and decision-taking should protect Green Belt from inappropriate development.
- promoting more private traveller site provision while recognising that there will always be those travellers who cannot provide their own sites.

- that plan-making and decision-taking should aim to reduce the number of unauthorised developments and encampments and make enforcement more effective.
- for local planning authorities to ensure that their Local Plan includes fair, realistic and inclusive policies.
- increasing the number of traveller sites in appropriate locations with planning permission, to address under provision and maintain an appropriate level of supply.
- reducing tensions between settled and traveller communities in plan-making and planning decisions.
- enabling provision of suitable accommodation from which travellers can access education, health, welfare and employment infrastructure.
- for local planning authorities to have due regard to the protection of local amenity and local environment.

2.1.8 Local planning authorities should use a robust evidence base to establish accommodation needs to inform the preparation of local plans and make planning decisions.

2.1.9 Local planning authorities should set pitch targets for gypsies and travellers and plot targets for travelling showpeople which address the likely permanent and transit site accommodation needs of travellers in their area, working collaboratively with neighbouring local authorities.

2.1.10 They should, in producing their Local Plan:

- Identify and update annually, a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years' worth of sites against their locally set targets.
- Identify a supply of specific, developable sites, or broad locations for growth, for years 6 to 10 and where possible, for years 11 – 15.
- Consider production of joint development plans that set targets on a cross-authority basis, to provide more flexibility in identifying sites.
- Relate the number of pitches or plots to the circumstances of the specific size and location of the site and the surrounding population's size and density.
- Protect local amenity and environment.

2.1.11 Criteria should be set to guide land supply allocations where there is identified need. Where there is no identified need, criteria-based

policies should be included to provide a basis for decisions in case applications nevertheless come forward.

2.1.12 Local planning authorities should ensure that traveller sites are sustainable economically, socially and environmentally. Local planning authorities should, therefore, ensure that their policies:

- promote peaceful and integrated co-existence between the site and the local community.
- promote, in collaboration with commissioners of health services, access to appropriate health services.
- ensure that children can attend school on a regular basis.
- provide a settled base that reduces both the need for long-distance travelling and possible environmental damage caused by unauthorised encampment.
- provide for proper consideration of the effect of local environmental quality (such as noise and air quality) on the health and well-being of any travellers that may locate there or on others as a result of new development.
- avoid placing undue pressure on local infrastructure and services.
- do not locate sites in areas at high risk of flooding, including functional floodplains, given the particular vulnerability of caravans.
- reflect the extent to which traditional lifestyles can contribute to sustainability.

2.1.13 Local planning authorities should consider, wherever possible, including traveller sites suitable for mixed residential and business uses, having regard to the safety and amenity of the occupants and neighbouring residents.

2.1.14 Local planning authorities should have regard to the need that travelling showpeople have for mixed-use yards to allow residential accommodation and space for storage of equipment.

2.2 Legislation

2.2.1 Relevant legislation on the Homes topic area relates to self-build and custom housebuilding, namely:

- The Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended by the Housing and Planning Act 2016).
- Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Regulations 2016.

2.2.2 This legislation sets out a legal definition of self-build and custom housebuilding and requirements in terms of registers.

2.3 Ministerial Statements

2.3.1 The 'Planning for accommodation for looked after children' Ministerial Statement made on 23 May 2023 sets out the Government's commitment to support the development of accommodation for looked after children, and its delivery through the planning system.

2.3.2 It highlights the importance of providing homes for looked-after children close to their own communities with access to good schools and community support. It states that local authorities should be supportive of applications that reflect local needs and that all parties in the development process should work together closely to facilitate the delivery of this form of accommodation.

2.4 Planning Practice Guidance

2.4.1 Planning Practice Guidance is an online resource that is updated on an ongoing basis as needed. There is a wide range of guidance on Homes.

Brownfield land registers

2.4.2 Relevant guidance on brownfield land registers states that:

- Local planning authorities should prepare, maintain and publish registers of brownfield land. Brownfield sites that meet the relevant criteria must be entered in Part 1 of the register and sites entered in Part 2 are granted permission in principle. These registers should be reviewed at least once a year (Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 59-002-20170728).

Build to rent

2.4.3 Relevant guidance on build to rent states that:

- Build to rent is a distinct asset class within the private rented sector. If a need is identified in their local housing need assessment, authorities should include a plan policy setting out their approach to promoting and accommodating build to rent, including recognising the circumstances and locations where build to rent developments will be encouraged (Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 60-001-20180913)
- The NPPF states that affordable housing on build to rent schemes should be provided by default in the form of affordable private rent, a class of affordable housing specifically designed for build to

rent. 20% is generally a suitable benchmark for the level of affordable private rent homes to be provided. If a different proportion is used, it should be justified by evidence in a local housing need assessment and set out in policy in a local plan (Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 60-002-20180913).

Effective use of land:

2.4.4 Relevant guidance on the effective use of land states that:

- When considering whether there is a realistic prospect of an allocated site being developed for its intended use, it may be relevant to take into account factors such as the length of time since the site was allocated in the development plan, the planning history of the site, whether the site has been actively marketed for its intended use and whether there are any changes of circumstance that mean take-up of the site for its intended use is now unlikely (Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 66-001-20190722).
- Local planning authorities have a range of tools to support proactive land assembly. These include powers to acquire land compulsorily or by agreement, powers to dispose of land in their ownership and powers to override easements and other rights in land. The effectiveness of, and justification for, the use of these powers can be enhanced by having up-to-date plans, which articulate a vision and objectives for the future development of an area and policies to help achieve them. (Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 66-002-20190722).
- A range of considerations should be taken into account in establishing appropriate densities on a site or in a particular area. Tools that can assist with this include accessibility measures such as distances and travel times to key facilities, characterisation studies and design strategies, environmental and infrastructure assessments and assessments of market or site viability (Paragraph: 004 Reference ID: 66-004-20190722).

Housing and economic land availability assessment

2.4.5 Relevant guidance states that:

- An assessment of land availability identifies a future supply of land which is suitable, available and achievable for housing over the plan period. The assessment is an important source of evidence to inform plan-making and decision-taking, and the identification of a 5-year supply of housing land. It can also inform as well as make use of sites in brownfield registers. (Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 3-001-20190722).

- The assessment does not in itself determine whether a site should be allocated for development. It is the role of the assessment to provide information on the range of sites which are available to meet the local authority's (or, where relevant, elected Mayor or combined authority) requirements, but it is for the development plan itself to determine which of those sites are the most suitable to meet those requirements (Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 3-001-20190722).
- An assessment should:
    - Identify sites and broad locations with potential for development
    - Assess their development potential and
    - Assess their suitability for development and the likelihood of development coming forward (Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 3-001-20190722).
- Plan-making bodies should consider constraints when assessing the suitability, availability and achievability of sites and broad locations. (Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 3-003-20190722).
- A site or broad location can be considered suitable if it would provide an appropriate location for development when considered against relevant constraints and their potential to be mitigated. Sites in existing development plans or with planning permission can generally be considered suitable for development although it may be necessary to assess whether circumstances have changed which would alter their suitability (Paragraph: 018 Reference ID: 3-018-20190722).
- A site can be considered available for development, when, on the best information available there is confidence that there are no legal or ownership impediments to development. For example, land controlled by a developer or landowner who has expressed an intention to develop may be considered available. The existence of planning permission can be a good indication of the availability of sites. Sites meeting the definition of deliverable should be considered available unless evidence indicates otherwise. Sites without permission can be considered available within the first five years (Paragraph: 019 Reference ID: 3-019-20190722).
- A site is considered achievable for development where there is a reasonable prospect that the particular type of development will be developed on the site at a particular point in time. This is essentially a judgement about the economic viability of a site and

the capacity of the developer to complete and let or sell the development over a certain period (Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 3-020-20190722).

- Where constraints have been identified, the assessment will need to consider what action could be taken to overcome them. Examples of constraints include policies in the NPPF and the adopted or emerging development plan, which may affect the suitability of the site, and unresolved multiple ownerships, ransom strips tenancies or operational requirements of landowners, which may affect the availability of the site (Paragraph: 021 Reference ID: 3-021-20190722).
- Information on suitability, availability, achievability and constraints can be used to assess the timescale within which each site is capable of development. This may include indicative lead-in times and build-out rates for the development of different scales of sites. On the largest sites allowance should be made for several developers to be involved. The advice of developers and local agents will be important in assessing lead-in times and build-out rates by year (Paragraph: 022 Reference ID: 3-022-20190722)
- A windfall allowance may be justified in the anticipated supply if a local planning authority has compelling evidence. as set out in the NPPF. Any allowance should be realistic having regard to the Local planning authorities have the ability to identify broad locations in years 6-15, which could include a windfall allowance (Paragraph: 023 Reference ID: 3-023-20190722).
- Once the sites and broad locations have been assessed, the development potential of all sites can be collected to produce an indicative trajectory. This should set out how much housing and the amount of economic development that can be provided, and at what point in the future (i.e. within years 1 to 5, 6 to 10, and 11 and beyond). An overall risk assessment should be made as to whether sites will come forward as anticipated (Paragraph: 024 Reference ID: 3-024-20190722).
- When preparing strategic policies, it may be concluded that insufficient sites / broad locations have been identified to meet objectively assessed needs. In the first instance, the assessment will need to be revisited. If insufficient land remains, then it will be necessary to investigate how this shortfall can best be planned for. If there is clear evidence that strategic policies cannot meet the needs of the area, factoring in the constraints, it will be important to establish how needs might be met in adjoining areas through the process of preparing statements of common ground, and in

accordance with the duty to cooperate (Paragraph: 025 Reference ID: 3-025-20190722).

- The following set of standard outputs are expected to be produced following the assessment (Paragraph: 026 Reference ID: 3-026-20190722):
    - A list of all sites or broad locations considered
    - An assessment of each site or broad location, including:
        - Where these have been discounted, evidence justifying reasons given
        - Where these are considered suitable, available and achievable, the potential type and quantity of development, including a reasonable estimate of build out rates, setting out how any barriers to delivery could be overcome and when.
        - An indicative trajectory of anticipated development based on the evidence available

Housing and economic needs assessment

2.4.6 The NPPF expects strategic policy-making authorities to follow the standard method in this guidance for assessing local housing need (Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 2a-002-20241212d).

2.4.7 Once local housing need has been assessed, as set out in this guidance, authorities should then make an assessment of the number of new homes that can be provided in their area. This should be justified by evidence on land availability, constraints on development and any other relevant matters (Paragraph: 040 Reference ID: 2a-040-20241212).

2.4.8 All households whose needs are not met by the market can be considered in affordable housing need (Paragraph: 018 Reference ID: 2a-018-20190220).

2.4.9 Strategic policy-making authorities will need to estimate the current number of households and projected number of households who lack their own housing or who cannot afford to meet their housing needs in the market (Paragraph: 019 Reference ID: 2a-019-20190220).

2.4.10 The total need for affordable housing will need to be converted into annual flows by calculating the total net need (subtract total available stock from total gross need) and converting total net need into an annual flow based on the plan period. The total affordable housing need can then be considered in the context of its likely

delivery as a proportion of mixed market and affordable housing developments, taking into account the probable percentage of affordable housing to be delivered by eligible market housing led developments. An increase in the total housing figures included in the plan may need to be considered where it could help deliver the required number of affordable homes (Paragraph: 024 Reference ID: 2a-024-20190220).

Housing needs of different groups

2.4.11 The housing need of different groups may exceed, or be proportionally high in relation to, the overall housing need figure calculated using the standard method. This is because the needs of particular groups will often be calculated having consideration to the whole population of an area as a baseline as opposed to the projected new households which form the baseline for the standard method. Plan-making authorities should assess the need for housing of different groups and reflect this in planning policies (Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 67-001-20190722).

2.4.12 Tenure data from the Office for National Statistics can be used to understand the future need for private rented sector housing. However, this will be based on past trends. The level of changes in rents, (known as "market signals"), may reflect the demand in the area for private rented sector housing (Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 67-002-20190722).

2.4.13 Most local planning authorities are now required to keep a register of individuals and associations of individuals who are seeking to acquire serviced plots of land in their area in order to build their own home. To obtain a robust assessment of demand for this type of housing in their area, local planning authorities should assess and review the data held on registers (Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 67-003-20190722)

Housing supply and delivery

2.4.14 Relevant guidance on housing supply and delivery states that:

- A 5-year land supply is a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years' worth of housing (and appropriate buffer) against a housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against a local housing need figure, using the standard method, as appropriate in accordance with the NPPF (Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 68-002-20241212).
- The NPPF states that to be considered deliverable, sites for housing should be available now, offer a suitable location for

development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within 5 years.

- The purpose of the 5-year supply is to provide an indication of whether there are sufficient sites available to meet the housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies for the next 5 years. Where strategic policies are more than 5-years old or have been reviewed and found in need of updating, local housing need calculated using the standard method should be used in place of the housing requirement (Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 68-003-20190722).
- In plan-making, strategic policies should identify a 5-year housing land supply from the intended date of adoption of the plan (Paragraph: 004 Reference ID: 68-004-20241212)
- Housing requirement figures identified in adopted strategic housing policies should be used for calculating the 5-year housing land supply figure where the plan was adopted in the last 5 years, or the strategic housing policies have been reviewed within the last 5 years and found not to need updating (Paragraph: 005 Reference ID: 68-005-20190722).
- Annex 2 of the NPPF defines a deliverable housing site. Sites which do not involve major development and have planning permission, and all sites with detailed planning permission should be considered deliverable until permission expires, unless there is clear evidence that homes will not be delivered within 5 years.
- Where sites have outline planning permission for major development, have been allocated in a development plan, have a grant of permission in principle, or are identified on a brownfield register, they should only be considered deliverable where there is clear evidence that housing completions will begin on site within 5 years. Such evidence may include the current planning status, firm progress being made toward the submission of an application, firm progress with site assessment work or clear information about site viability, ownership constraints or infrastructure provision, such as successful participation in bids for large-scale infrastructure funding or other similar projects (Paragraph: 007 Reference ID: 68-007-20190722).
- In plan-making, the Inspector examining the plan will test the evidence to ensure that the 5-year housing land supply identified in strategic policies is sound. If it is not, wherever possible the Inspector will recommend main modifications to the plan to ensure that the plan identifies a 5-year housing land supply from

its date of adoption (Paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 68-008-20190722).

- Local planning authorities should identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth for years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15. Local plans and spatial development strategies may be able to satisfy the tests of soundness where they have not been able to identify specific sites or broad locations for growth in years 11-15 (Paragraph: 010 Reference ID: 68-019-20190722).
- Annex 2 of the NPPF defines what constitutes a developable site. In demonstrating that there is a 'reasonable prospect' plan-makers can use evidence such as (but not exclusively) written commitment or agreement that relevant funding is likely to come forward within the timescale indicated, written evidence of agreement which confirms the developers' delivery intentions and anticipated start and build-out rates, likely build-out rates on sites with similar characteristics and current planning status (Paragraph: 011 Reference ID: 68-020-20190722).
- A pragmatic approach is appropriate when demonstrating the intended phasing of sites. For example, for sites which are considered developable within 6-10 years, the authority may need to provide a greater degree of certainty than those in years 11-15 or beyond (Paragraph: 011 Reference ID: 68-020-20190722).
- To ensure that there is a realistic prospect of achieving the planned level of housing supply, the local planning authority should always add an appropriate buffer, applied to the requirement in the first 5 years (including any shortfall), bringing forward additional sites from later in the plan period (Paragraph: 013 Reference ID: 68-023-20241212).
- An authority should add one of the following buffers, depending on circumstances:
    - 5% - the minimum buffer for all authorities, necessary to ensure choice and competition in the market or
    - 20% - the buffer for authorities where delivery of housing taken as a whole over the past 3 years, has fallen below 85% of the requirement, as set out in the last published Housing Delivery Test results or
    - From 1 July 2026, 20% where a local planning authority has a housing requirement adopted in the last five years, which was examined against a version of the NPPF published before 12 December 2024, and where their annual average housing

requirement is less than 80% of the most up to date local housing need figure as calculated using the standard method. The housing requirement to be considered for the purposes of this buffer is defined as the total housing requirement, divided by the number of years in the plan period, rather than any stepped housing requirement. For joint local plans, the percentage should be applied in aggregate across the joint local plan area (Paragraph: 013 Reference ID: 68-023-20241212).

- Five-year land supply is measured across the plan period against the specific stepped requirements for the particular 5-year period (Paragraph: 017 Reference ID: 68-026-20190722).

Housing Delivery Test measurement rule book

2.4.15 The Housing Delivery Test is an annual measurement of housing delivery in the area of relevant plan-making authorities. It is a percentage measurement of the number of net homes delivered against the number of homes required, as set out in the relevant strategic policies for the areas covered by the Housing Delivery Test, over a rolling 3-year period.

Housing: optional technical standards

2.4.16 Local planning authorities have the option to set additional technical requirements exceeding the minimum standards required by Building Regulations in respect of access and water, and an optional nationally described space standard. Local planning authorities will need to gather evidence to determine whether there is a need for additional standards in their area, and justify setting appropriate policies in their Local Plans (Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 56-002-20160519).

2.4.17 Local planning authorities should consider the impact of using these standards as part of their Local Plan viability assessment (Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 56-003-20150327).

2.4.18 Based on their housing needs assessment and other available datasets it will be for local planning authorities to set out how they intend to approach demonstrating the need for Requirement M4(2) (accessible and adaptable dwellings), and/or M4(3) (wheelchair user dwellings), of the Building Regulations (Paragraph: 007 Reference ID: 56-007-20150327).

2.4.19 Where a local planning authority adopts a policy to provide enhanced accessibility or adaptability, they should do so only by reference to Requirement M4(2) and/or M4(3) of the optional requirements in the Building Regulations and should not impose any

additional information requirements or seek to determine compliance with these requirements, which is the role of the Building Control Body. They should clearly state in their Local Plan what proportion of new dwellings should comply with the requirements (Paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 56-008-20160519).

2.4.20 Local Plan policies should also take into account site specific factors such as vulnerability to flooding, site topography, and other circumstances which may make a specific site less suitable for M4(2) and M4(3) compliant dwellings, particularly where step free access cannot be achieved or is not viable. Where step-free access is not viable, neither of the Optional Requirements in Part M should be applied (Paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 56-008-20160519).

2.4.21 Part M of the Building Regulations sets a distinction between wheelchair accessible (a home readily useable by a wheelchair user at the point of completion) and wheelchair adaptable (a home that can be easily adapted to meet the needs of a household including wheelchair users) dwellings. Local Plan policies for wheelchair accessible homes should be applied only to those dwellings where the local authority is responsible for allocating or nominating a person to live in that dwelling (Paragraph: 009 Reference ID: 56-009-20150327).

2.4.22 All new homes already have to meet the mandatory national standard set out in the Building Regulations (of 125 litres/person/day). Where there is a clear local need, local planning authorities can set out Local Plan policies requiring new dwellings to meet the tighter Building Regulations optional requirement of 110 litres/person/day (Paragraph: 014 Reference ID: 56-014-20150327).

2.4.23 It will be for a local planning authority to establish a clear need based on existing sources of evidence, consultations with the local water and sewerage company, the Environment Agency and catchment partnerships, and consideration of the impact on viability and housing supply of such a requirement (Paragraph: 015 Reference ID: 56-015-20150327).

2.4.24 Where a local planning authority wishes to require an internal space standard, they should only do so by reference in their Local Plan to the nationally described space standard (Paragraph: 018 Reference ID: 56-018-20150327).

Housing for older and disabled people

2.4.25 Plan-making authorities should set clear policies to address the housing needs of groups with particular needs such as older and

disabled people. These policies can set out how the plan-making authority will consider proposals for the different types of housing that these groups are likely to require. They could also provide indicative figures or a range for the number of units of specialist housing for older people needed across the plan area throughout the plan period (Paragraph: 006 Reference ID: 63-006-20190626).

2.4.26 Where an identified need exists, plans are expected to make use of the optional technical housing standards to help bring forward an adequate supply of accessible housing (Paragraph: 009 Reference ID: 63-009-20190626).

2.4.27 There are different types of specialist housing designed to meet the diverse needs of older people, which can include age restricted general market housing, retirement living or sheltered housing, extra care housing / housing with care, and residential care homes and nursing homes There is a significant amount of variability in the types of specialist housing for older people. This is an indication of the different types of housing available but is not definitive. Any single development may contain a range of different types of specialist housing (Paragraph: 010 Reference ID: 63-010-20190626).

2.4.28 Plans need to provide for specialist housing for older people where a need exists. Many older people may not want or need specialist accommodation or care and may wish to stay or move to general housing that is already suitable, such as bungalows, or homes which can be adapted to meet a change in their needs. Plan-makers will therefore need to identify the role that general housing may play as part of their assessment. Plan-makers will need to consider the size, location and quality of dwellings needed in the future for older people in order to allow them to live independently and safely in their own home for as long as possible, or to move to more suitable accommodation if they so wish (Paragraph: 012 Reference ID: 63-012-20190626).

2.4.29 It is up to the plan-making body to decide whether to allocate sites for specialist housing for older people. Allocating sites can provide greater certainty for developers and encourage the provision of sites in suitable locations. This may be appropriate where there is an identified unmet need for specialist housing. The location of housing is a key consideration for older people who may be considering whether to move (including moving to more suitable forms of accommodation). Factors to consider include the proximity of sites to good public transport, local amenities, health services and town centres (Paragraph: 013 Reference ID: 63-013-20190626).

2.4.30 Developments should address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport. Issues to consider include:

- ease and comfort of movement on foot and with mobility aids between homes, services and town centres
- proximity and links to public transport and local amenities
- parking spaces and setting down points in proximity to entrances
- the positioning and visual contrast of street furniture and the design of approach routes to meet the needs of people with different needs
- whether entrances to buildings are clearly identified, can be reached by a level or gently sloping approach and are well lit
- the accessibility of public spaces including step free spaces and seating

Self-build and custom housebuilding

2.4.31 Responsibility for keeping a self-build and custom housebuilding register falls to "relevant authorities" as set out in section 1 of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended by the Housing and Planning Act 2016) (Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 57-001-20170728).

2.4.32 Relevant authorities should consider how local planning policies may address identified requirements for self and custom housebuilding to ensure enough serviced plots with suitable permission come forward (for example, as a number of units required as part of certain allocated sites, or on certain types of site). More widely, relevant authorities can play a key role in brokering and facilitating relationships to help bring suitable land forward (Paragraph: 025 Reference ID: 57-025-20210508).

2.5 Land Use Framework for England

2.5.1 In March 2026, the Government published England's first Land Use Framework, which provides an evidence-led national context for more consistent and joined-up decisions about land to support housing and infrastructure delivery, maintain food production, restore nature and build climate resilience.

2.5.2 The framework is not intended to prescribe land uses in specific locations or form part of planning policy; instead, it sets a national vision, principles and actions that reinforce the approach to our Local

Plan Policies in supporting multifunctional land use, nature recovery, energy supply and nature-based solutions.

2.5.3 The Land Use Framework concludes that England has enough land to meet key national needs - housing, domestic food production, nature recovery and clean power - and that these should not be treated as "competing demands." This is, however, conditional on using land more strategically and efficiently (including multifunctional use) supported by better data and strategic planning.

2.6 Development plan documents that will be replaced by the Local Plan, on adoption

The Replacement Unitary Development Plan (2006)

2.6.1 The Replacement Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was adopted in 2006 but many policies within it were replaced by policies in the Local Plan Core Strategy when it was adopted in September 2013 – see Appendix A of the Core Strategy for details. Those policies are shown crossed out in the contents list in the version of the UDP on the council's website.

2.6.2 The remaining policy for Homes in the UDP is:

Policy R1E Open Space in New Housing Developments

2.6.3 The intention is to replace the remaining policies in the UDP by content in the Local Plan as applicable. Policy R1E content is covered in the People chapter and is therefore covered in Topic Paper 7 on the People policies.

The Local Plan Core Strategy (2013)

2.6.4 The Local Plan Core Strategy was adopted in 2013. Some policies, and a part of one policy, within it were replaced by policies in the Places for Everyone (PfE) Plan when it was adopted in March 2024 – see Appendix A of the Places for Everyone Plan for details. Those policies are shown crossed out in the version of the Core Strategy on the council's website.

2.6.5 Policy CP6 Housing remains in the Local Plan Core Strategy except for clause 1 on the net additional dwellings needed per year, which was replaced by content in policy JP-H1 in the PfE Plan.

2.6.6 This policy focuses housing in the east-west core of the borough, encourages new housing on previously developed land, promotes the re-use of vacant buildings for residential use, seeks a mix of housing, seeks the provision of 25% affordable housing on viable sites

of 10 dwellings or more, and seeks to address any shortfalls in provision for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople.

2.7 Supplementary Planning Documents

2.7.1 There are a number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) that support policies on Homes. A brief description and purpose for each SPD is set out below.

Affordable Housing in New Residential Development (2013)

2.7.2 This SPD provides guidance on how Wigan Core Strategy policy CP6 will be applied and sets out the council's approach to securing affordable housing. It expects affordable housing provision to be provided on-site unless off-site provision can be justified. Guidance is provided on financial contributions for off-site provision.

2.7.3 The SPD requires affordable homes to be integrated into developments and provides information on the type and tenure sought, which is based on evidence of local housing needs. It also provides guidance in relation to affordable housing requirements in specialist and retirement housing.

2.7.4 It is intended that the SPD will remain upon adoption of the Local Plan.

House Extensions Design Guide (2019)

2.7.5 With the aim of improving the quality of submissions for planning approval to achieve better quality developments, the House Extensions Design Guide expands on national and local planning policy and raises awareness of the value of good design. This includes how it can benefit the home being extended, protect the residential amenity of neighbouring homes, and enhance the local environment.

2.7.6 It provides general design guidelines for applicants in relation to siting, built form and scale, architectural details, the position of windows and doors, material s and finishes, alterations to assist people with disabilities and boundary treatments, trees and landscape schemes.

2.7.7 It is intended that the SPD will remain upon adoption of the Local Plan.

Residential Design Guide (2006)

2.7.8 Similar to the House Extensions Design Guide, the Residential Design Guide was prepared with the aim of improving the quality of submissions for planning approval to achieve better quality

developments, and to raise general awareness of the value of good design and how it can be achieved.

2.7.9 It sets general planning and design guidelines for applicants, in relation to the efficient use of land; access to local facilities and public transport, crime prevention and community safety; social inclusion; energy efficiency and innovative design; residential amenity; and access for all.

Homes in Multiple Occupation (2022)

2.7.10 This SPD was produced to better manage the provision of HMOs throughout the borough, improve the standards of accommodation provided and reduce detrimental impacts on neighbours.

2.7.11 It sets out guidance on avoiding concentrations of HMOs, restricting the sandwiching of non-HMOs, and restricting adjacent HMOs. It sets out the council's HMO standards and provides guidance in relation to safeguarding the amenity of neighbours, including the submission of a management plan as part of the planning application process.

2.8 Neighbourhood plans

2.8.1 There are Neighbourhood Plan for Standish (2019), Golborne and Lowton West (2023) and Abram (2025). There are policies on Homes in the Golborne and Lowton West and X / all three neighbourhood plans / There are no policies on X in the neighbourhood plans.

Standish Neighbourhood Plan

2.8.2 The Standish Neighbourhood Plan has the following policies relating to Homes:

- **Policy H1: Sustainable Housing Growth** - This policy states that Safeguarded Land within Standish should only be released for housing development where it can be demonstrated that:
  - 1,148 of the homes already permitted on Safeguarded Land as at 31 July 2017, have been built out and occupied in line with permissions
  - All of the necessary infrastructure works required through legal agreements for the level of housing have been completed and implemented and
  - It is demonstrably evidenced that further housing development can be accommodated across the full range of transport, health, education, open space, community and

utility infrastructure without detriment to the character and wellbeing of Standish

- **Policy H2: New Developments to Meet Local Housing Need** - This policy requires major developments to include an appropriate mix of house size, type, price and tenure to address identified local need.
- **Policy H3: Accessibility to Sustainable Transport/Bus Routes** - This policy requires new housing development to be within walking distance of a bus stop.
- **Policy H4: Affordable Housing Provision in Standish** - This policy sets out the approach to affordable housing provision in Standish, which seeks to meet local needs.
- **Policy H5: Allocation of Sites for Housing** - This policy allocates two small sites for housing to meet local needs in Standish.
- **Policy H6: Major Housing Developments to Provide Air Quality Assessment and Mitigation Measures** - This policy sets out requirements for air quality assessment in relation to major housing development.

The Golborne and Lowton West Neighbourhood Plan

2.8.3 The Golborne and Lowton West Neighbourhood Plan has one policy relating to Homes:

- **Policy GLW-C1: Housing** - This policy supports a mix of new residential development that takes account of the most recent evidence of local housing need and aims to diversify the housing offer, including providing accommodation for older people and smaller housing (1, 2 or 3 bedrooms).

  The policy seeks varied provision of affordable housing, including consideration of First Homes, shared ownership, rent-to-buy, or Equity Loan. It supports exceptional design quality and exceptional building environmental performance. It requires dwellings to incorporate screened storage for bins and recycling, secure storage for cycles and charging facilities for vehicles and electric cycles.

Abram Neighbourhood Plan

2.8.4 The Abram Neighbourhood Plan has two policies relating to Homes:

- **Policy RD1: Residential Development** - This policy states that new residential development will be supported on brownfield

land and on urban infill sites within existing frontages. It also requires new housing to take account of local housing needs.

- **Policy REF1: Reuse and Refurbishment** - This policy supports the re-use and/or refurbishment of vacant buildings, including for residential purposes.

2.9 The Places for Everyone Plan

2.9.1 The Places for Everyone (PfE) Plan was adopted in March 2024. It is the strategic plan for Greater Manchester, not including Stockport but including the other nine districts, of which Wigan Borough is one. On adoption, the Wigan Borough Local Plan will sit alongside the PfE Plan, as part of the wider development plan for the borough, and should be consistent with it, in line with the December 2023 version of the NPPF (paragraph 36).

2.9.2 The PfE Plan has a mix of strategic and detailed policies. It has 4 policies relating directly to the Homes topic area, the key elements of which are set out in turn below. It also has 3 site allocations within the borough either for residential development or including residential development, which contribute towards the borough's housing land supply, which are also set out below.

Policy JP-H1: Scale, Distribution and Phasing of New Housing Development

2.9.3 This policy sets out that a minimum of 175,185 dwellings will be delivered in the PfE Plan area over the period 2022 – 2039, or an annual average of 10,305.

2.9.4 It states that new homes will be of good quality and design, adaptable, supported by the necessary infrastructure and amenities and their distribution will support the plan's overall strategy which enables people to reduce the need to travel when taking advantage of key assets.

2.9.5 In Wigan Borough, it sets out that 16,527 homes should be delivered over the period 2022 – 2039. This equates to an annual average of 972 dwellings per year and is phased as follows:

2022 - 2025 (annual): 814 dwellings per year

2025 - 2030 (annual): 972 dwellings per year

2030 – 2039 (annual): 1,025 dwellings per year

2.9.6 The delivery rates are minimum number of net additional dwellings each district is expected to identify a sufficient supply of sites for through their local plans.

2.9.7 Where national policy requires a local planning authority to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites in their district, this will be assessed against the minimum delivery rates for the district, irrespective of any shortfalls or surpluses in other districts and in the Plan area overall (unless national policy requires a different figure to be used).

2.9.8 Each local authority will monitor delivery rates within their area and will take action as necessary to ensure that delivery rates are maintained as anticipated in this plan. If this regular monitoring reveals significant deviation from the plan phasing, the factors resulting in these changes will be determined and consideration will be given to what action would be appropriate, including development management action and review of the policies in the PfE Plan. This work would feed into the regular reviews of the PfE Plan, although individual authorities may wish to take specific local action outside the formal review process to ensure they can maintain delivery rates.

Policy JP-H2: Affordability of New Housing

2.9.9 This policy seeks substantial improvements in the ability of people to access housing at a price they can afford, including through:

- Significantly increasing the supply of new housing, in accordance with JP-H1, thereby reducing the potential for a shortfall to lead to large house price and rent increases.
- Maximising the delivery of additional affordable homes, including through local plans setting targets for the provision of affordable housing for sale and rent as part of market-led developments based on evidence relating to need and viability.
- Supporting provision of affordable housing as part of new developments (avoiding where possible clusters of tenure to deliver mixed communities).
- Working with Government to maximise the amount of public funding being directed towards the provision of new affordable housing.
- Increasing the supply of low-cost market housing, to complement the provision of affordable homes and diversify options for low-income households.

Policy JP-H3: Type, Size and Design of New Housing

2.9.10 This policy requires development across the PfE Plan area to seek to incorporate a range of dwelling types and sizes including for self-

build and community led building projects to meet local needs and deliver more inclusive neighbourhoods. Where appropriate, this should include incorporating specialist housing for older households and vulnerable people.

2.9.11 Residential developments should provide an appropriate mix of dwelling types and sizes reflecting local plan policies, and having regard to masterplans, guidance and relevant local evidence.

2.9.12 Housing provision to accommodate specific groups, such as students and travelling people, will be addressed through district local plans. All new dwellings must:

- Comply with the nationally described space standards; and
- Be built to the 'accessible and adaptable' standard in Part M4 (2) of the Building Regulations unless specific site conditions make this impracticable.

2.9.13 Innovation in housing development will be supported where it is consistent with the principles of good design and contributes to local distinctiveness, including the use of modern methods of manufacturing that can help to improve the speed of delivery and increase building standards.

Policy JP-H4: Density of New Housing

2.9.14 This policy requires new housing development to be delivered at a density appropriate to the location, reflecting the relative accessibility of the site by walking, cycling and public transport and the need to achieve efficient use of land and high-quality design. Regard should be had to the minimum densities set out in Table TP2.1 below.

2.9.15 The policy states that lower densities may be acceptable where they can be clearly justified by local housing market issues, such as a demonstrable need for a particular type of housing that cannot be delivered at a higher density, or site-specific issues, such as the design context and any potential impact on the wider landscape or townscape including heritage assets and green infrastructure

Table TP2.1: Minimum net density requirements, Places for Everyone Plan

Location (use highest density that applies when a site falls within more than one location)	**Minimum net residential density (dwellings per ha): Within the location**	**Minimum net residential density (dwellings per ha): Within 400 metres**	**Minimum net residential density (dwellings per ha): Within 800 metres**
Designated centres:			
City Centre	200	120	70
Designated town centres	120	70	50
Other designated centres	70	50	35
Public transport stops			
Main rail stations and Metrolink stops in the City Centre	n/a	200	120
Other rail stations and Metrolink stops in large, designated centres	n/a	120	70
Other rail stations with a frequent service and all other Metrolink stops	n/a	70	50
Leigh Guided Busway stops	n/a	50	35
Areas within GMAL 6 and above or its equivalent	50	35	35
All other locations: minimum net residential density of 35 dwellings per hectare			

2.9.16 The policy states that, in order to achieve an appropriate mix of housing across the plan area, developments should include the provision of houses and/or apartments having regard to the following and the need to achieve high quality design:

- 35 – 70 dwellings per hectare: primarily houses
- 70 – 120 dwellings per hectare: mix of houses and apartments
- 120 + dwellings per hectare: primarily apartments, incorporating houses and ground-floor duplexes where practicable

JP Allocation 32: North of Mosley Common

2.9.17 This land is allocated to deliver around 1,100 homes, including affordable housing in accordance with local policy requirements, with higher densities close to existing and new bus stops on the Leigh – Salford – Manchester (LSM) Guided Busway as applicable. The policy sets out a range of development criteria for the site.

JP Allocation 33: Pocket Nook

2.9.18 This land is allocated to deliver around 600 homes (and around 15,000 sqm of employment floorspace), including affordable housing in accordance with local policy requirements. The policy sets out a range of development criteria for the site.

JP Allocation 34: West of Gibfield

2.9.19 This land is allocated to deliver around 500 new homes (and around 45,500 sqm of employment floorspace), including affordable housing in accordance with local policy requirements. The policy sets out a range of development criteria for the site.

2.10 The policy requirements for Homes in the Wigan Borough Local Plan

2.10.1 Having considered national planning policy and guidance and, where applicable, legislation and Ministerial Statements for the Local Plan on planning for Homes, the existing local development plan that will be replaced by the Local Plan, the wider planning policy and guidance locally across Supplementary Planning Documents and Neighbourhood Plans, and both the extent that the recently adopted PfE Plan both meets those requirements and sets new ones for the Local Plan, there is a strong case for the Wigan Borough Local Plan to include policies on the following matters:

- Housing delivery
- Housing mix
- Site allocations for new homes

- Sustainable housing growth in Standish
- Houses in multiple occupation
- Homes for looked after children
- Accommodation for gypsies and travellers
- Accommodation for travelling showpeople

2.10.2 The PfE Plan sets the housing requirement for the borough in Policy JP-H1: Scale, Distribution and Phasing of New Housing Development, which is informed by the standard method in place at the time of its preparation. The proposed Local Plan policy on housing delivery seeks to deliver this level of housing and a housing supply is identified throughout the borough, including sites within the three designated neighbourhood areas which are subject to adopted Neighbourhood Plans. Consequently, specific housing requirement figures for these areas are not set out in this Local Plan.

2.10.3 The tighter optional water efficiency standard is proposed for inclusion within the Local Plan but is included in policy E13 in the Environment Chapter.

2.10.4 A policy is not being taken forward on compliance with nationally described space standards and the 'accessible and adaptable' standard on Part M4 (2) of the Building Regulations because these standards are covered by PfE policy JP-H3: Type, Size and Design of New Housing.

2.10.5 The reason for not taking forward a policy on housing densities is that this is covered by PfE policy JP-H4: Density of New Housing

2.10.6 The reason for not taking forward policy content relating to rural housing matters is twofold, primarily that Wigan Borough is a Greater Manchester district and does not have rural areas, and also that the open land between built areas that is not on the edge of towns and safeguarded for future development is designated as Green Belt.

3. Our Homes policies

3.1 Housing delivery

The proposed policy

3.1.1 Policy H1 covers the delivery of housing in the borough.

3.1.2 The policy emphasises the importance of working closely with developers, registered providers, strategic partner bodies and other organisations to address the borough's housing needs.

3.1.3 It sets out the borough's housing requirement and identifies sources of supply to meet these requirements over the plan period 2022 - 2039.

3.1.4 The proposed policy also highlights that the delivery of housing will be monitored to ensure that there is an adequate supply of new housing at all times.

The policy context for the proposed policy

3.1.5 The NPPF sets out that the Government wants to significantly boost the supply of homes. The overall aim should be to meet as much of an area's identified housing need as possible, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community.

3.1.6 The Local Plan provides a policy framework to enable the delivery of the housing requirement for the borough set in the PfE Plan. This approach is in accordance with paragraph 234(c) of the NPPF. The Local Plan is not required to address housing need derived through the new national standard method as set out in Planning Practice Guidance.

3.1.7 Policy JP-H1 in the PfE Plan requires an average of 972 homes per annum (net) to be delivered over the period 2022 – 2039 in the Borough, which equates to 16,527 homes over the plan period. These are minimum figures.

3.1.8 The PfE Plan was prepared during a period of uncertainty due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Taking account of this uncertainty, the housing requirement for most boroughs was phased, with lower levels of housing delivery anticipated over the period 2022 - 2025. The phased housing requirement for Wigan Borough is set out as follows:

- 2022 - 2025: 814 dwellings per annum
- 2025 - 2030: 972 dwellings per annum
- 2030 - 2039: 1,025 dwellings per annum

3.1.9 The plan period in the Local Plan runs to 2039, which aligns with the plan period in the PfE Plan. This is a shorter timeframe than required by the NPPF, which sets out that plans should look ahead over a minimum 15-year period from plan adoption. However, it is considered premature to plan for housing needs beyond 2039 in the Local Plan prior to a comprehensive assessment of housing needs being undertaken at the sub-regional level.

3.1.10 Discussions are at an advanced stage with the GMCA and the other Greater Manchester districts to agree the timeframe for this assessment, which may form part of a Greater Manchester Spatial Development Strategy (SDS), with adoption in 2029/30.

3.1.11 New policy UP1 is proposed in the Local Plan committing to an early update of the plan, at least in relation to meeting identified housing needs. It is intended that this will be informed by a comprehensive assessment of housing needs, capacity and policy undertaken at a sub-regional level, or at least sufficiently progressed, to meaningfully inform the borough's housing needs post 2029.

3.1.12 The NPPF requires planning policies to identify a sufficient supply and mix of sites to address housing requirements, taking into account their availability, suitability and likely economic viability.

3.1.13 Planning policies should identify a supply of specific, deliverable sites for five years following the intended date of plan adoption and specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for the subsequent years 6 – 10 and, where possible, for years 11 – 15 of the remaining plan period. Land to accommodate at least 10% of the housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare should be identified.

3.1.14 Proposed Policy H1 breaks down the housing supply by its planning status over the PfE Plan Period as follows:

- Completions from 01 April 2022 – 31 March 2026
- Sites allocated in the Places for Everyone Plan
- Sites allocated in this Local Plan
- 2026 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) supply broken down into sites under construction, sites with full planning permission or reserved matters approval, sites with outline planning permission, sites with permission in principle or prior approval and anticipated windfall sites based on SHLAA evidence.

- A windfall allowance for small sites of less than 5 units based on historic trends

3.1.15 Over the period 01 April 2022 – 31 March 2026 housing delivery has been strong in the borough, with 5,109 homes delivered (an annual average of 1,277 homes). This leaves a residual requirement over the period 2026 – 2039 of 11,418 homes to meet the PfE target. This supply comes from a range of sources.

3.1.16 The identified supply includes 3 sites that are allocated in the PfE Plan (JPA32: North of Mosley Common, JPA33: Pocket Nook and JPA34 West of Gibfield). Residential development has started to take place at North of Mosley Common and permission has been granted for residential development on the first parcel at Pocket Nook. Progress is also being made in bringing West of Gibfield forward. Taking account of permissions granted, it is estimated that 2,227 homes will be developed on the land allocated in the PfE Plan over the plan period.

3.1.17 6 sites are allocated in this Local Plan for residential development. Five of these proposed allocations are considered fully developable over the plan period. The exception is South Hindley, where around 1,392 of the 2,000 homes are considered developable over the period. In total, around 4,682 homes are considered developable over the plan period on Local Plan allocations.

3.1.18 Therefore, around 6,909 homes in the supply are on allocated sites. The remainder of the supply consists of homes identified on sites in the SHLAA, together with a windfall allowance for small sites for the period 2030 onwards.

3.1.19 The majority of the homes on sites identified in the SHLAA already have planning permission, with a significant number on sites under construction. This supply consists of approximately:

- 1,582 homes on sites under construction
- 1,115 homes on sites with full planning permission / reserved matters approval / prior approval that are not under construction
- 1,647 homes on sites with outline planning permission
- 220 homes on small sites with planning permission.

3.1.20 Therefore, in addition to the 6,909 homes on allocated sites, there are approximately 4,564 further homes on sites that have planning permission or prior approval. As such, a supply of around 11,473 homes has been identified on allocated sites and sites where

housing has been approved, set against an outstanding requirement of 11,418 homes to meet the PfE target.

3.1.21 In addition, the SHLAA identifies land for a further 2,264 homes on sites without planning permission, which are considered developable over the plan period. This includes 275 homes where planning approval is pending. Some of this supply is also on sites that are actively being brought forward by the council, as part of a land disposal programme for surplus or underused council owned sites to support and enable the delivery of additional new homes to meet needs.

3.1.22 A small sites windfall allowance of 50 homes per annum has also been identified based on the annual average number of residential completions on small sites of less than 5 dwellings over the period 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2026. The small sites allowance has only been applied from 2030 onwards given that most completions from small sites up to 2030 will already have planning permission and be covered in the supply. This equates to 450 homes.

3.1.23 Therefore, a total supply of around 14,187 homes has been identified, which is 2,769 more homes than required to meet the remaining requirement for 11,418 homes. This is considered to provide a sufficient flexibility allowance to allow for any non-delivery on sites or delivery at a lower rate than anticipated. Around 81% of this supply is on allocated sites or sites that have planning permission for residential development.

3.1.24 This policy identifies a supply of sites to meet NPPF requirements, including a five-year supply and is consistent with Policy JP-H1 in the PfE Plan. It includes a trajectory illustrating the expected rate of housing delivery over the plan period.

3.1.25 As required by the NPPF, land to accommodate at least 10% of the housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare is identified.

3.1.26 In terms of completions over the period 2022 – 2026 there were 1,265 completions on small sites no larger than one hectare, which equates to an average of 316 homes per year. In terms of the supply over the period 2026 – 2039, around 2,179 homes are identified on sites no larger than 1 hectare. Therefore, over the period 2022 – 2039, land to accommodate around 3,444 homes is identified, which equates to around 20% of the PfE Plan housing requirement.

Key evidence

3.1.27 Key evidence supporting the content in the Housing delivery policy is found in the Wigan 2026 SHLAA, the Housing Delivery Test Measurement and the Wigan Brownfield Land Register.

Wigan 2026 SHLAA

3.1.28 The 2026 Wigan SHLAA is a key component of the council's housing evidence base. It sets out the sites that form the borough's housing supply broken down by planning status and anticipated delivery period, and it sets out anticipated windfall sites. It includes a housing trajectory and sets out the latest five-year supply figure including an appropriate buffer and provides information to support the windfall allowance for small sites.

3.1.29 The SHLAA was informed by engagement with developers, registered providers, landowners, site promoters, agents, Homes England, the GMCA and other stakeholders actively involved in housing delivery across the borough. Particular focus is given to the evidence, market intelligence and delivery information provided by the Council's Housing Enabling and Development Team, which plays a central and proactive role in facilitating and enabling residential development in Wigan Borough.

3.1.30 The Housing Enabling and Development Team maintains direct working relationships with national and regional housebuilders, small and medium-sized developers, registered providers, landowners, investors, planning agents, funding bodies and infrastructure partners. The team works across a wide and varied portfolio of sites, providing support throughout the development process, from the initial identification and assessment of opportunities through to planning, funding, land assembly, delivery strategy, construction and completion.

3.1.31 This work includes identifying and promoting development opportunities; supporting the disposal and development of Council-owned land; facilitating affordable housing provision; negotiating delivery arrangements with registered providers and housebuilders; securing and coordinating external investment; and helping partners overcome planning, viability, infrastructure, remediation, ownership and funding constraints.

3.1.32 The team also provides a key point of contact for developers, connecting them with relevant Council services and external partners and helping to coordinate a joined-up response to barriers that could otherwise delay or prevent housing delivery.

3.1.33 Through regular engagement with registered providers and housebuilders, the team holds current intelligence on organisational development programmes, investment priorities, funding availability, land acquisition requirements, tenure preferences, delivery capacity and anticipated timescales. This enables the Council to understand where there is genuine market and partner interest in individual sites, whether a delivery route has been identified, what interventions may be required and when housing development can realistically be expected to commence and complete.

3.1.34 Housebuilders were contacted to seek up-to-date information about the development trajectory of their sites. Information was requested on a range of matters including first site completions, annual build-out rates, anticipated site completion dates and any constraints to site development. The responses received informed the housing trajectory in the SHLAA and in the Local Plan.

Housing Delivery Test measurement

3.1.35 Local planning authorities are subject to an annual Housing Delivery Test (HDT). This sets out a standard measure to compare the delivery of homes over the previous three financial years against the number of homes required during that period.

3.1.36 The Government published the 2025 HDT measurement in August 2026. Wigan Borough has a strong record of housing delivery in recent years and scored 153% in the 2025 HDT. This means the Council is only required to apply a 5% buffer when calculating its five-year housing land supply.

Wigan Brownfield Land Register

3.1.37 The borough's most recent brownfield land register was published in December 2025. It is a Part 1 register and identified brownfield sites with the potential to accommodate around 7,070 new homes across the borough. An updated brownfield land register is produced annually.

The Places for Everyone Plan Strategic Transport Model

3.1.38 The purpose of the PfE Plan Strategic Transport Model was to assess whether the proposed distribution of the land supply for homes, jobs and other uses across the nine Greater Manchester council areas could be accommodated on the transport network, and to identify the mitigation required to support sustainable growth.

3.1.39 The model drew upon the Greater Manchester transport modelling framework used by Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) and was

aligned with the Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040. This transport evidence base evaluated highway and public transport networks up to 2037, to ensure strategic site allocations integrate cleanly with regional infrastructure, including the Bee Network integration.

3.1.40 Systra led the assessment and mitigation of transport impacts arising from development proposals within the PfE Plan. The review considered the proposed homes and employment land supply for each borough to consider the necessary and supporting multi-modal interventions required to mitigate the impact to a position of nil detriment.

3.1.41 Systra was commissioned by Wigan Council to undertake a review of its Local Plan and compliance with the PfE Plan transport model through the preparation of a Strategic Technical Note. This review considered changes to the employment land supply since the PfE Plan was adopted. This included consideration of the completions which have occurred since adoption and new sites that have emerged since that time.

3.1.42 This review concluded that while there have been minor changes to the quantum of the PfE Plan land supply as they have progressed through the development process, these are unlikely to give rise to significant changes to the forecast traffic impacts across the wider Wigan Borough, necessitating additional mitigation.

3.1.43 The assessment confirmed that the scale and distribution of development proposed within the borough had been appropriately represented within the PfE Plan evidence base, and that the identified strategic transport interventions provide an appropriate framework for accommodating forecast growth.

3.1.44 This review also found no material transport-related issues that would undermine the soundness of the Local Plan, subject to the continued delivery of the committed transport infrastructure, sustainable travel measures, and site-specific mitigation identified through the PfE Locality Assessments, and subsequent transport evidence.

3.1.45 The 2026 Transport Evidence Review Note has been published online alongside this topic paper.

The integrated assessment of the Local Plan

3.1.46 The broad implications of the policy for sustainable development are set out in the matrix at appendix B of the integrated assessment (IA) of the Local Plan, against the 14 sustainability objectives established

in Table 3.1 of the IA. It sets out that, as an individual policy, policy H1 is broadly positive against the housing objective and broadly neutral against the other 13 objectives.

Replacing policies currently remaining in the Local Plan Core Strategy, the Replacement Unitary Development Plan and the Policies Map

3.1.47 This policy will replace parts of Core Strategy policy CP6 'Housing', including criteria 2, 3 and 5.

Policies map content

3.1.48 The sites promoted for new homes in policies H3-H8 are shown on the policies map.

Evidence map content

3.1.49 Our housing land supply maps arising from our Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment are shown on the evidence map.

The duty to cooperate

3.1.50 Meeting housing requirements is a strategic cross-boundary matter relating to this policy that has been identified through the duty to cooperate on the Local Plan. However, Wigan Council intends to meet its housing requirement within the borough without further incursion into the Green Belt. Therefore, we are not asking any other district to accommodate any of our housing need and neither are we being asked to accommodate any unmet housing need from adjacent local authorities.

3.1.51 The position with this strategic cross-boundary matter will be set out in the final Duty to Cooperate Statement of Common Ground. This will be produced ahead of submission of the local plan for independent public examination.

Delivering the policy

3.1.52 This policy will be delivered by landowners, developers, Registered Providers and the council as local planning authority through the development management process and through the active delivery of new homes.

Summary and conclusion

3.1.53 Policy H1 identifies the borough's housing requirement as set out in the PfE Plan and identifies sources of supply to meet this requirement over the plan period. Policy H1 and its trajectory confirm that the requirement can be met, with the 2026 Wigan SHLAA

forming a key component of the housing supply evidence. The policy accords with the NPPF, relevant PPG and the PfE Plan.

3.2 Housing mix

The proposed policy

3.2.1 Policy H2 covers the provision of a mix of housing in the borough.

3.2.2 The proposed policy highlights that new residential development should be delivered at an appropriate density in accordance with PfE Plan policy JP-H4 and contribute to the provision of a mix of housing types, sizes and tenures across the borough to help address identified housing needs.

3.2.3 It sets out requirements in relation to the provision of affordable housing and housing for older people and other specialist housing. It also sets out when affordable homes for care leavers will be sought, that the council will work with developers to deliver plots for self-build and custom-build housing and sets out how proposals for houses extensions will be assessed.

The policy context for the proposed policy

3.2.4 The NPPF highlights the Government's the overall aim of meeting as much of an area's identified housing need as possible, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community.

3.2.5 Within the context of establishing need, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies. These groups should include (but are not limited to) those who require affordable housing; families with children; older people (including those who require retirement housing, housing-with-care and care homes); students; people with disabilities; service families; travellers; people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes.

3.2.6 In accordance with the NPPF, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups has been assessed. Evidence on housing need is found in the Wigan Borough Local Housing Needs Assessment 2024 (LHNA). Evidence on traveller need is found in The Greater Manchester Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2024). Both documents are considered further in this Topic Paper.

3.2.7 Where a need for affordable housing is identified, the NPPF specifies that planning policies should specify the type of affordable housing required and expect it to be met on-site unless off-site provision or an appropriate financial contribution in lieu can be robustly justified and that the agreed approach contributes to the objective of

creating mixed and balanced communities. Policy H2 specifies the proportion of affordable homes to be required on sites of 10 homes or more and specifies the type of affordable housing required based on evidence in the LHNA, which accords with the NPPF. The policy also sets out that the proportion and tenure of affordable homes required on build to rent developments is lower, reflecting PPG on build to rent.

Key evidence

3.2.8 Key evidence supporting the content in the 'housing mix policy includes the Wigan Borough Local Housing Needs Assessment 2024, the Wigan Council Looked After Children Sufficiency Strategy 2025 – 2028, the Wigan self-build and custom housebuilding register and the House Extensions Design Guide SPD.

Wigan Borough Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) 2024

3.2.9 The LHNA provides evidence to support the Local Plan in relation to housing needs based on up-to-date analysis of the social, economic, housing and demographic situation across the borough. The study divides the borough into 10 sub-areas to enable more detailed analysis of housing mix in different parts of the borough.

3.2.10 The LHNA identifies the need for dwellings of different sizes and types, broken down by sub-area. It shows that the housing mix needed varies across the borough, and whilst the predominant need is for houses, there is also a significant need for level-access bungalows, and a smaller need for flats. In terms of dwelling size, the greatest need is for 3-bedroom properties but there is also a significant need for 2-bedroom properties and a need for 4-bedroom properties, with the proportions varying between the sub-areas.

3.2.11 Policy H2 requires new residential development to contribute to the provision of a mix of housing types, sizes and tenures to help address identified housing needs, reflecting the latest LHNA, or an equivalent requirement.

3.2.12 In terms of affordable housing, the LHNA identifies an overall need for the delivery of 283 affordable homes each year. It highlights that PPG is clear that only a proportion of this need is expected to be delivered through the planning process. The analysis broadly translates to a 75% rented and 25% affordable home ownership split, with a particular emphasis on the need to deliver social rented homes. Affordable home ownership products would include shared ownership and First Homes. The LHNA also sets out information on affordable housing need on a sub-area basis.

3.2.13 In line with the LNHA, policy H2 requires developments of 10 homes or more to make provision for at least 25% affordable homes, subject to viability, comprising a tenure split of 25% affordable home ownership and 75% for rent, with homes for social rent prioritised.

3.2.14 The LHNA states that the private rented sector is an important tenure in terms of meeting people's housing needs and providing flexible housing options. Across the borough, the proportion of households renting increased from 5.4% in 2001 to 16.2% in 2021 (ONS). Housebuilders are showing increased interest in developing build-to-rent schemes in the borough. These will contribute to the provision of a mix of housing tenures in the borough. Policy H2 sets out the proportion of affordable housing that is required on build to rent schemes in accordance with national guidance.

3.2.15 The proportion of residents aged 65 and over in the borough is higher than the average in England and the borough has an ageing population. One quarter of the borough's population is expected to be aged 65 and over by 2039. It is important that the Local Plan takes account of their needs.

3.2.16 The LHNA identifies particular needs in relation to older people, including a significant need to increase and diversify the supply of specialist housing, including sheltered, retirement, extra care, co-housing and residential care. Policy H2 requires developers of housing to show how their site meets the needs of older people and people with disabilities. The proposed policy is supportive of the development of residential care homes and nursing homes where there is a demonstrable need for this type of housing.

3.2.17 PPG on housing for older and disabled people highlights that many older people may not want or need specialist accommodation or care and may wish to stay or move to general housing that is already suitable, such as bungalows, or homes which can be adapted to meet a change in their needs. Reflecting this, the LHNA states that based on an assessment of additional needs and longer-term demographics, 3.6% of new dwellings should be built to Building Regulations M4(3) wheelchair accessible standard, and that all other new dwellings should be built to M4(2) accessible and adaptable standard, which would include bungalows and level access accommodation.

3.2.18 Reflecting the LHNA, policy H2 sets out a requirement for a minimum of 4% of new homes on residential schemes of 20 homes or more to be wheelchair accessible, unless this is impracticable due to site-specific factors, or is demonstrated to be unviable. PfE Plan

policy JP-H3: Type, Size and Design of New Housing requires all new dwellings to be built to M4 (2) of the Building Regulations unless specific site conditions make this impracticable.

3.2.19 Reflecting PPG, and the need for inclusive design for older and disabled people, policy H2 also includes specific criteria in relation to issues that they may face.

3.2.20 No specific need has been identified from stakeholder discussions in relation to students. Although Wigan and Leigh College offers some degree courses in partnership with the University of Lancashire, the college does not provide its own accommodation as most students live locally.

Wigan Council Looked After Children Sufficiency Strategy 2025 – 2028

3.2.21 The council has a legal corporate parenting duty, and this responsibility has been developed to ensure that care leavers have the right support in place, if they want to access it, to help them with their transition from leaving care in order for them to live successful adult lives.

3.2.22 This strategy highlights this and part of this is the need to ensure that young people moving from the care system can access suitable housing options.

3.2.23 Around 13% of 17-18 year-old and 51% of 19–21-year-old care leavers live independently in the borough. In the year to March 2024, 99 17-year-olds left care, and this number is rising annually. It is important, therefore, to ensure that care leavers have a suitable home.

3.2.24 In order to ensure that care leavers can access suitable housing options, policy H2 seeks affordable homes for care leavers as part of the section 106 agreements for affordable housing as part of new housing development, and as part of suitable council and registered provider housing developments.

3.2.25 It is important that this accommodation meets an identified need as agreed by the council, is suitable, and is in a sustainable location where young people can access services and amenities. These homes will be ringfenced / allocated to care leavers through the mechanisms of Local Letting Policies and Nomination Agreements. Applicants should liaise with the council at the earliest opportunity to ensure that proposals are appropriate.

Wigan self-build and custom house building register

3.2.26 In accordance with relevant legislation, the council keeps a register of individuals and associations of individuals who have expressed an interest in acquiring land for self-build and custom-build housing.

3.2.27 In order to deliver self-build and custom-build housing, the proposed policy highlights that the council will work with developers to deliver this form of housing, subject to local demand as set out in the register. The policy also highlights that the council will work with the self-build / custom-build communities to further understand their requirements and promote on their behalf.

House Extensions Design Guide SPD

3.2.28 Proposed Policy H2 indicates that proposals for the extension of residential properties should accord with the principles and design guidelines set in this SPD. However, it recognises that there may be circumstances where it can be demonstrated that a proposed extension is necessary to provide a genuine health and wellbeing benefit, such as enabling a person needing care to remain in their own home, where exceptions could be permitted, providing that they don't adversely impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties.

The integrated assessment of the Local Plan

3.2.29 The broad implications of the policy for sustainable development are set out in the matrix at appendix B of the integrated assessment (IA) of the Local Plan, against the 14 sustainability objectives established in Table 3.1 of the IA. It sets out that, as an individual policy, policy H2 is broadly positive against the housing, health and community and equality and diversity objectives and broadly neutral against the other 11 objectives.

Replacing policies currently remaining in the Local Plan Core Strategy, the Replacement Unitary Development Plan and the Policies Map

3.2.30 This policy will replace parts of Core Strategy policy CP6 'Housing', including criteria 6 and 7.

Policy map content

3.2.31 There is no policies map content in relation to this policy.

Evidence map content

3.2.32 There is no evidence map content in relation to this policy.

The duty to cooperate

3.2.33 There are no strategic cross-boundary matters related to this policy that have been identified through the duty to cooperate on the Local Plan.

Delivering the policy

3.2.34 This policy will be delivered by landowners, developers, Registered Providers and the council as local planning authority through the development management process and through the active delivery of new homes.

Summary and conclusion

3.2.35 The policy seeks to deliver a mix of housing types, sizes and tenures to help address identified local housing needs across the borough. To help address specific needs, criteria are set out in relation to affordable housing, housing for older people and people with disabilities, care leavers, self-build and custom-build housing, and with regard to house extensions that are required to provide a genuine health and wellbeing benefit.

3.3 Site allocations for new homes

3.3.1 To help address the quantitative need for housing set out in Policy H1 and to provide a mix of housing to help address identified local housing needs set out in Policy H2, 6 housing allocations are proposed in the Local Plan. The case for each of these allocations is set out separately in individual Site Allocation Assessment Reports.

3.4 Sustainable housing growth in Standish

The proposed policy

3.4.1 Policy H9 covers sustainable housing growth in Standish.

3.4.2 Standish Neighbourhood Plan Policy H1 refers to safeguarded land but this is being removed from the Policies Map through this Local Plan. Policy H9 identifies five sites and makes it clear that for the purposes of Neighbourhood Plan Policy H1, safeguarded land refers to these five identified sites.

The policy context for the proposed policy

3.4.3 The key policy context for the proposed policy is set out in the Wigan Replacement Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and the Standish Neighbourhood Plan.

Wigan Replacement Unitary Development Plan

3.4.4 Policy GB2 in the Wigan UDP identifies safeguarded land in the borough, which may be required to serve development needs in the longer term. This includes safeguarded land in Standish. However, land safeguarded for development in the UDP is being removed from the Policies Map through this Local Plan because it is developed, is proposed to be developed through the Local Plan or is not developable. The exception to this is these five sites in Standish which are subject to policy H1 in the Standish Neighbourhood Plan.

Standish Neighbourhood Plan

3.4.5 Much of the land safeguarded for development in Standish has now been developed for housing but there are some areas of developable land remaining. Policy H1 in the Standish Neighbourhood Plan restricts the release of further safeguarded land within the neighbourhood area unless specified criteria are met.

3.4.6 Policy H9 identifies developable land currently designated as safeguarded land in five locations in Standish. The policy makes clear that for the purposes of the neighbourhood plan Policy H1, the reference to safeguarded land refers to these five sites and that development of these sites should accord with criteria (ii) and (iii) of policy H1 in the Neighbourhood Plan. Policy H9 does not refer to criterion i) because this can now be demonstrated, as more than 1,148 homes have been built out and occupied on safeguarded land in Standish.

The integrated assessment of the Local Plan

3.4.7 The broad implications of the policy for sustainable development are set out in the matrix at appendix B of the integrated assessment (IA) of the Local Plan, against the 14 sustainability objectives established in Table 3.1 of the IA. It sets out that, as an individual policy, policy H9 is broadly positive against the housing, health and community, transport and town centres objectives and broadly neutral against the other 10 objectives.

Replacing policies currently remaining in the Local Plan Core Strategy, the Replacement Unitary Development Plan and the Policies Map

3.4.8 This policy will not replace any policy content in the Core Strategy. However, the 5 sites will replace content on the existing Policies Map under UDP policy GB2 'Safeguarded land'. Further information on the de-designation of all of the safeguarded land shown on the existing policies map can be found in the Wigan Borough Local Plan Safeguarded Land Report.

Policies map content

3.4.9 The five sites referred to in this policy are shown on the policies map.

Evidence map content

3.4.10 There is no evidence map content in relation to this policy.

The duty to cooperate

3.4.11 There are no strategic cross-boundary matters related to this policy that have been identified through the duty to cooperate on the Local Plan.

Delivering the policy

3.4.12 This policy will be delivered by landowners, developers and the council as local planning authority through policy H1 in the Standish Neighbourhood Plan as part of the development management process.

Summary and conclusion

3.4.13 Policy H9 is necessary to ensure that Policy H1 of the Standish Neighbourhood Plan can still be implemented in the absence of safeguarded land being designated in Standish on the proposed Local Plan Policies Map.

3.5 Houses in multiple occupation

The proposed policy

3.5.1 Policy H10 covers houses in multiple occupation (HMOs).

3.5.2 The policy sets out criteria for assessing planning applications for HMOs to ensure that they provide a good standard of accommodation for their occupants, whilst not having an unacceptable impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers and the character of the wider neighbourhood.

The policy context for the proposed policy

3.5.3 HMOs are not specifically referred to in the NPPF, but they do form part of the housing mix and provide cheaper, more flexible accommodation, often for people whose housing options are limited. The Wigan Replacement Unitary Development Plan and Local Plan Core Strategy do not specifically refer to HMOs, but the borough has a Supplementary Planning Document on HMOs, which is referred to later in this Topic Paper.

Key evidence

2025 Boroughwide HMO Article 4 Direction

3.5.4 Many HMOs in the borough are well managed and provide good homes for their residents, but poorly managed or badly designed or located properties, or a high concentration of HMOs in a neighbourhood, have the potential to lead to issues for both occupants and neighbours.

3.5.5 As set out in the Cabinet Report for the boroughwide Article 4 Direction approved at the meeting on 3rd July 2025, some of the most common concerns expressed in relation to HMOs relate to:

- Negative changes to the character of the area and the cohesion and resilience of the local community
- Negative impacts on the amenity of neighbours through the greater intensity of use of HMOs
- Pressure on parking provision
- Waste storage and litter
- Anti-social behaviour and crime
- Negative impacts on the physical environment and streetscape

- The provision of inadequate living accommodation for occupiers

3.5.6 In response to these concerns, and evidence that these issues were being encountered at an accelerating rate, Cabinet approved a boroughwide Article 4 Direction which came into force on 31 August 2025. This removed permitted development rights for changes of use from individual dwellinghouses to small houses in multiple occupation. As a result, all new HMOs in the borough, regardless of size, now need planning permission. Requiring the submission of a planning application for all HMOs will allow their impacts on local amenity and the community to be taken into consideration through the planning process.

3.5.7 Policy H10 will be a key policy for use in the determination of these applications for HMOs. It considers whether there is an unacceptable concentration of HMOs in an area, whether sandwiching of properties between HMOs will occur, whether development will result in blocks of HMOs, the impact on occupiers of neighbouring properties and the surrounding area, and impact on parking. It also seeks to ensure that proposals provide acceptable levels of amenity for their occupants.

Houses in Multiple Occupation SPD

3.5.8 This SPD was published in 2022 to better manage the provision of HMOs throughout the borough, improve the standards of accommodation provided and reduce detrimental impacts on neighbours. Its content has helped to inform the approach taken in the proposed policy. It will need to be amended to reflect the fact that some content is now in policy H10 and the introduction of the boroughwide Article 4 Direction.

The integrated assessment of the Local Plan

3.5.9 The broad implications of the policy for sustainable development are set out in the matrix at appendix B of the integrated assessment (IA) of the Local Plan, against the 14 sustainability objectives established in Table 3.1 of the IA. It sets out that, as an individual policy, policy H10 is broadly positive against the housing, health and community, equality and diversity, historic environment, landscape/townscape and town centres objectives and broadly neutral against the other 8 objectives.

Replacing policies currently remaining in the Local Plan Core Strategy, the Replacement Unitary Development Plan and the Policies Map

3.5.10 This policy will not replace any policy content in the Core Strategy or the UDP, or any content on the policies map.

Policies map content

3.5.11 There is no policies map content in relation to this policy.

Evidence map content

3.5.12 The borough-wide Article 4 Direction that removes permitted development rights for changes of use from individual dwellinghouses to small HMOs is shown on the Evidence Map. Further mapping layers on HMOs will be added to the evidence map when available

The duty to cooperate

3.5.13 There are no strategic cross-boundary matters related to this policy that have been identified through the duty to cooperate on the Local Plan.

Delivering the policy

3.5.14 This policy will be delivered by property owners, developers, landlords and the council as local planning authority through the development management process.

Summary and conclusion

3.5.15 HMOs form part of the borough's housing supply and contribute to housing mix. However, they typically intensify the use of properties and concentrations of them can impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers and change the character of the wider neighbourhood. The proposed policy sets out when the Council will support applications for HMOs and seeks to ensure that they provide a good standard of accommodation for their occupants and do not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of neighbours or the character of the wider neighbourhood.

3.6 Homes for looked after children

The proposed policy

3.6.1 Policy H11 covers the provision of homes for looked after children.

3.6.2 The policy highlights that providers and developers of children's residential and supported accommodation should work proactively with the council to ensure that new provision meets identified local needs.

3.6.3 It sets out criteria for assessing proposals for new children's residential and supported accommodation to ensure that they address local needs, are in a suitable location, do not result in an undue concentration of such accommodation and provide a good standard of accommodation for local children.

3.6.4 The proposed policy specifies that a section 106 agreement will need to be entered into to control the occupancy of homes for looked after children.

The policy context for the proposed policy

3.6.5 The NPPF (2023) does not refer specifically to looked after children, but the NPPF (2024) includes them as a group whose need for housing should be assessed and reflected in planning policies. It indicates that evidence of need for looked after children can be found in the relevant local authority's Children's Social Care Sufficiency Strategy.

Key evidence

Ministerial Statement: Planning for accommodation for looked after children (23 May 2023)

3.6.6 The 'Planning for accommodation for looked after children' Ministerial Statement highlights the importance of providing homes for looked after children close to their own communities with access to good schools and community support. It states that local authorities should be supportive of applications that reflect local needs and that all parties in the development process should work together closely to facilitate the delivery of this form of accommodation.

3.6.7 The proposed policy highlights the importance of working together to facilitate this form of accommodation and aims to ensure that proposals that meet identified local needs, which is in accordance with the Ministerial Statement.

Wigan Council Looked After Children Sufficiency Strategy 2025 – 2028

3.6.8 The Wigan Council Looked After Children Sufficiency Strategy sets out evidence in terms of looked after children in the borough. It seeks to contribute significantly to the ambitions for looked after children highlighted in the Greater Manchester Children's Plan including supporting looked after children through quality homes that meet all of their needs.

3.6.9 One of the priorities is to secure Wigan Borough beds for Wigan Borough children, reducing the number of local beds occupied by other local authorities. The strategy states that our capacity at a local level to place our children close is now impacted by the number of looked after children from other authorities. Whilst there are a small number of children who need be placed a distance away from the borough to keep them safe, it is integral that most children are placed close to home in order to promote their cultural links, identity and sense of belonging.

3.6.10 The strategy emphasises that the council needs to work with providers to ensure that provision is more varied to respond to the needs of children in Wigan Borough. It is a requirement of the proposed policy that providers / developers engage with the council and the services with responsibility for looked after children before submitting an application, to assess whether it meets the needs of local children and to ensure that it accords with the strategy.

3.6.11 The proposed policy requires applicants to enter into a section 106 agreement to specify that the property can only be occupied on a residential basis by children either placed by Wigan Council or with the written agreement of the council's Children's Services Department. This is to ensure that sufficient provision exists locally to meet the council's needs but also to provide enough flexibility for applicants to operate on a viable basis.

3.6.12 The strategy seeks to increase the quality of homes for looked after children and one of the aims of the proposed policy is to ensure that good quality accommodation is provided in appropriate premises and suitable locations to meet the needs of looked after children. The policy also seeks to ensure that there are not undue concentrations of such homes to safeguard local character, protect amenity and reduce pressures on local public services.

3.6.13 The council is now of the opinion that a change of use from a dwellinghouse to children's residential or supported accommodation will generally be material and consequently subject to the need for a

planning application, rather than being subject of a Certificate of Lawfulness. This gives the council greater control over the quality of provision and the ability to ensure that provision gives priority to the needs of Wigan children.

The integrated assessment of the Local Plan

3.6.14 The broad implications of the policy for sustainable development are set out in the matrix at appendix B of the integrated assessment (IA) of the Local Plan, against the 14 sustainability objectives established in Table 3.1 of the IA. It sets out that, as an individual policy, policy H11 is broadly positive against the housing, health and community and equality and diversity objectives and broadly neutral against the other 11 objectives.

Replacing policies currently remaining in the Local Plan Core Strategy, the Replacement Unitary Development Plan and the Policies Map

3.6.15 This policy will not replace any policy content in the Core Strategy or the UDP, or any content on the policies map.

Policies map content

3.6.16 There is no policies map content in relation to this policy

Evidence map content

3.6.17 There is no evidence map content in relation to this policy.

The duty to cooperate

3.6.18 There are no strategic cross-boundary matters related to this policy that have been identified through the duty to cooperate on the Local Plan.

Delivering the policy

3.6.19 This policy will be delivered by property owners, developers, children's care providers, children's services at the council and the council as local planning authority through the development management process.

Summary and conclusion

3.6.20 The proposed policy seeks to ensure that good quality accommodation is provided for looked after children in appropriate premises and locations within the borough to meet identified local needs. The proposed policy accords with the Wigan Council Looked After Children Sufficiency Strategy 2025 – 2028 and with the 2023

Ministerial Statement on planning for the accommodation of looked after children.

3.7 Accommodation for gypsies and travellers

The proposed policy

3.7.1 Policy H12 covers the provision sites for gypsies and travellers.

3.7.2 The proposed policy sets out that existing sites for gypsies and travellers will be safeguarded for continued use unless criteria within the policy are met relating to replacement provision or there is a demonstrable lack of current or projected demand for the site from gypsies or travellers.

3.7.3 To address an identified shortfall of gypsy and traveller pitches in the borough over the plan period, the proposed policy identifies land at Little Lane, Pemberton as an extension to an existing traveller site.

3.7.4 The proposed policy also sets out criteria for assessing any proposals that come forward for additional capacity to meet gypsy and traveller need over the plan period.

The policy context for the proposed policy

3.7.5 National policy on traveller sites in 'Planning policy for traveller sites' (PPTS), states that local planning authorities should use a robust evidence base to establish accommodation needs to inform the preparation of local plans and make planning decisions. The policy is informed by robust evidence in the 2024 Greater Manchester Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment, which is considered later in this Topic Paper.

3.7.6 PPTS requires local planning authorities to set pitch targets for gypsies and travellers which address their needs. They should also identify a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years' worth of sites against targets and identify a supply of specific, developable sites, or broad locations, for years 6 to 10 and where possible, for years 11 – 15.

3.7.7 The policy and its supporting text identify a pitch target to address needs. A specific deliverable site is allocated to meet the identified need for pitches over the plan period in accordance with PPTS. In addition, existing sites are safeguarded to ensure that these are retained to address gypsy and traveller needs.

3.7.8 PPTS requires criteria to be set to guide land supply allocations where there is identified need. The proposed policy includes criteria that aim to ensure that the proposed site allocation addresses the needs of its residents, whilst safeguarding their residential amenity and the residential amenity of neighbouring residents.

3.7.9 In addition, PPTS states that where there is no identified need, criteria-based policies should be included to provide a basis for decisions in case applications nevertheless come forward. In accordance with PPTS, the proposed policy includes criteria for assessing any applications that come forward. These criteria include those proposed for the site allocation but also include additional criteria related to the site location.

The Greater Manchester Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2024

3.7.10 The Greater Manchester Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) 2024 is key evidence supporting the content in the Accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers Policy. This identifies the accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers in Wigan Borough and the other Greater Manchester authorities, in accordance with PPTS.

3.7.11 The GTAA has included a review of existing secondary data, site observation, household surveys, and analysis of site management and planning application/appeal data. This data has been assessed to provide a picture of current provision and an assessment of future need.

3.7.12 The GTAA identified 5 existing gypsy and traveller sites in the borough with capacity for 42 pitches. These sites are safeguarded in this policy. The GTAA finds a minimum need for 18 additional gypsy and traveller pitches across Wigan Borough over the period 2023/24 to 2040/41, which is a slightly longer period than covered by the Wigan Borough Local Plan. The detailed need for pitches in Wigan is set out in Table TP2.2 below:

Table TP2.2: Gypsy and traveller pitch need in the borough

2023/24 - 2027/28	2028/29 - 2032/33	2033/34 - 2037/38	2038/39 - 2040/41	Total net shortfall
6	5	6	1	18

3.7.13 In order to address need, GTAA survey respondents and site owners were asked about the potential expansion and/or intensification of existing sites to help meet need. Through these discussions, the GTAA highlights the potential extension of the existing site at Little Lane, Pemberton, using adjacent Wigan Council freehold land to accommodate up to 20 pitches, which is just above the identified need for 18 pitches.

3.7.14 The existing Little Lane site is a successful site in Pemberton. Taking account of the findings in the LHNA, the proposed policy allocates adjoining underutilised land as an extension of this site to address gypsy and traveller need. This land is freehold owned by Wigan Council, and dialogue has taken place with the current occupier about the surrender of the land so that it can be used for traveller pitches. Following this, it is anticipated that heads of terms will be issued in respect of a grant of lease for the site for travellers, subject to planning approval.

3.7.15 The existing site and the proposed extension are located within the settlement boundary and are not in an area of high risk of flooding. The site's location enables access to services and amenities in Pemberton and Wigan, and it is considered to be a suitable location for gypsy and traveller accommodation.

The integrated assessment of the Local Plan

3.7.16 The broad implications of the policy for sustainable development are set out in the matrix at appendix B of the integrated assessment (IA) of the Local Plan, against the 14 sustainability objectives established in Table 3.1 of the IA. It sets out that, as an individual policy, policy H12 is broadly positive against the housing, health and community, equality and diversity, water and transport objectives and broadly neutral against the other 9 objectives.

Replacing policies currently remaining in the Local Plan Core Strategy, the Replacement Unitary Development Plan and the Policies Map

3.7.17 This policy will replace parts of Core Strategy policy CP6 'Housing', notably content in criterion 9.

Policies map content

3.7.18 Existing gypsy and traveller site provision and land at Little Lane, Pemberton, which is allocated as an extension of the existing traveller site, are shown on the policies map.

Evidence map content

3.7.19 There is no evidence map content in relation to this policy.

The duty to cooperate

3.7.20 Meeting gypsy and traveller accommodation need is a strategic cross-boundary matter that has been identified through the duty to cooperate on the Local Plan. However, Wigan Council intends to meet its own requirement within the borough. It is unable to

accommodate any unmet gypsy and traveller need from adjacent local authorities and will not be seeking for those authorities to meet part of its need.

3.7.21 The position with this strategic cross-boundary matter will be set out in the final Duty to Cooperate Statement of Common Ground. This will be produced on conclusion of the Proposed Submission consultation and ahead of submission of the local plan for independent public examination.

Delivering the policy

3.7.22 This policy will be delivered by landowners, the gypsy and traveller communities and the council as local planning authority through the development management process.

Summary and conclusion

3.7.23 This proposed policy aims to effectively address the accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers in the borough, whilst respecting the interests of the settled community. It is based on robust evidence about the need for gypsy and traveller accommodation as set out in the 2024 Greater Manchester GTAA.

3.7.24 The proposed policy safeguards existing sites and aims to address identified future need by allocating land as an extension of an existing traveller site. It includes criteria to help ensure that the proposed site allocation and any other proposals that come forward effectively address the needs of their occupants, whilst safeguarding their amenity and the amenity of neighbouring residents. The proposed policy is consistent with national planning policy on gypsies and travellers in PPTS.

3.8 Accommodation for travelling showpeople

The proposed policy

3.8.1 Policy H13 covers the provision of accommodation for travelling showpeople.

3.8.2 The proposed policy sets out that existing sites will be safeguarded for continued use by travelling showpeople unless criteria within the policy are met relating to replacement provision or a demonstrable lack of current or projected demand for the site from travelling showpeople.

It also sets out criteria for assessing any proposals that come forward for additional capacity to meet travelling showpeople need over the plan period.

The policy context for the proposed policy

3.8.3 National policy on travelling showpeople sites in PPTS states that local planning authorities should use a robust evidence base to establish accommodation needs to inform the preparation of local plans and make planning decisions. The proposed policy is informed by evidence in the 2024 Wigan Borough LHNA, which has been considered earlier in this Topic Paper and is considered later in respect of accommodation for travelling showpeople.

3.8.4 PPTS requires local planning authorities to set plot targets for travelling showpeople which address their needs. They should also identify a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years' worth of sites against targets and identify a supply of specific, developable sites, or broad locations, for years 6 to 10 and where possible, for years 11 – 15.

3.8.5 PPTS states that where there is no identified need, criteria-based policies should be included to provide a basis for decisions in case applications nevertheless come forward. The policy includes criteria for assessing any applications for travelling showpeople sites that come forward.

The Wigan Borough Local Housing Needs Assessment 2024 (LHNA)

3.8.6 The 2024 Greater Manchester GTAA found that the evidence on the needs of travelling showpeople presented in the 2018 Greater Manchester GTAA remained appropriate and, therefore, did not undertake further analysis in relation to travelling showpeople. However, further assessment was undertaken in the 2024 Wigan

Borough LHNA, which forms key evidence supporting the content in the Accommodation for Travelling Showpeople policy.

3.8.7 There are three existing sites in the borough at:

- Fairview, Bag Lane, Atherton (29 plots)
- Ella View Lodge, Colliery Lane, Atherton (14 plots)
- Seaman Way, Ince (24 plots)

3.8.8 The Seaman Way, Ince, site has been developed since the publication of the 2018 GTAA. It was created as part of the relocation and expansion of the former Presbyterian Fold, Hindley site. It is a large purpose-built site with 24 plots and the assessment undertaken for the LHNA found that only 6 of these plots were occupied.

3.8.9 The LHNA only identified a small number of children on the borough's sites and states that their future needs can be accommodated on the existing yards. It concludes that, on the basis of the evidence, the Local Plan does not need to allocate any additional land for travelling showpeople. However, it recommends that land is safeguarded for travelling showpeople use.

3.8.10 In the absence of any identified unmet need the policy does not set plot targets for travelling showpeople. Instead, it safeguards the existing sites as recommended by the LHNA and sets out criteria for assessing any applications that do come forward, in accordance with PPTS.

The integrated assessment of the Local Plan

3.8.11 The broad implications of the policy for sustainable development are set out in the matrix at appendix B of the integrated assessment (IA) of the Local Plan, against the 14 sustainability objectives established in Table 3.1 of the IA. It sets out that, as an individual policy, policy H13 is broadly positive against the housing, health and community, equality and diversity and transport objectives and broadly neutral against the other 10 objectives.

Replacing policies currently remaining in the Local Plan Core Strategy, the Replacement Unitary Development Plan and the Policies Map

3.8.12 This policy will replace parts of Core Strategy policy CP6 'Housing', notably content in criterion 9.

Policies map content

3.8.13 Existing travelling showpeople site provision is safeguarded on the policies map.

Evidence map content

3.8.14 There is no evidence map content in relation to this policy.

The duty to cooperate

3.8.15 Meeting travelling showpeople accommodation need is a strategic cross-boundary matter relating to this policy that has been identified through the duty to cooperate on the Local Plan. However, Wigan Council is able to address its need on existing sites and does not require other authorities to meet its need.

3.8.16 The position with this strategic cross-boundary matter will be set out in the final Duty to Cooperate Statement of Common Ground. This will be produced on conclusion of the Proposed Submission consultation and ahead of submission of the local plan for independent public examination.

Delivering the policy

3.8.17 This policy will be delivered by landowners, travelling showpeople and the council as local planning authority through the development management process.

Summary and conclusion

3.8.18 This proposed policy aims to effectively address the accommodation needs of travelling showpeople in the borough, whilst respecting the interests of the settled community. It is based on robust evidence about the need for travelling showpeople accommodation as set out in the 2024 Wigan Borough LHNA. This concluded that the Local Plan does not need to allocate any additional land for travelling showpeople based on the current occupancy of existing yards.

3.8.19 The proposed policy safeguards existing yards in the borough and includes criteria to help ensure that any proposals that do come forward effectively address the needs of their occupants, whilst safeguarding residential amenity. The proposed policy is consistent with national planning policy on travelling showpeople in PPTS.