



# **Wigan Local Plan**

## **Allocations and Development Management Local Plan**

### **Consultation Report**

**Inception**

**February 2014**

**Places Directorate**



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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. This statement sets out details of the consultation that has taken place to inform the commencement of the Wigan Allocations and Development Management Local Plan. The consultation was carried out in compliance with Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012. The regulation requires us to:
  - Notify those specified in the regulations of the subject of the local plan; and
  - Invite them to make representations about what the local plan ought to contain.
- 1.2. Our Statement of Community Involvement (August 2013) sets out who we will involve and how this will be done when preparing a Local Plan. It can be viewed on the council's website.
- 1.3. The Wigan Allocations and Development Management Local Plan needs to be prepared within the framework set by the Local Plan Core Strategy which was adopted in September 2013, unless evidence suggests otherwise. The Core Strategy is the strategic plan for the borough and the Allocations and Development Management Local Plan will provide the detailed planning policy and land allocations to complement that strategy.
- 1.4. This report sets out the responses we received to the consultation exercise undertaken, which gave members of the public, groups, organisations and other interested parties the opportunity to tell us what they thought the Wigan Allocations and Development Management Local Plan ought to contain and what the key issues are for us to address.

## **2. Who we consulted, when and how**

- 2.1. Engagement is carried out in accordance with our Statement of Community Involvement, adopted in August 2013.
- 2.2. In order to commence the process we identified the key issues we believed the Wigan Allocations and Development Management Local Plan should address. These were:
  - The need to focus development primarily on Wigan, Ince, Hindley, Platt Bridge, Leigh, Atherton, Tyldesley and Astley and also Golborne, Lowton and Standish
  - The need to capitalise on the borough's strategic location at the heart of the North West
  - The need to allocate land for around 15,000 new homes, with an appropriate mix of house types, sizes, tenures and affordability, to ensure that people have somewhere to live
  - The need to allocate around 200 hectares of land for businesses to safeguard jobs and help create new jobs
  - The need to help Wigan, Leigh, Ashton and our other town and local centres provide what people want
  - The need to deliver strategic transport infrastructure interventions to make it easier for people and business to access what they need

- The need to help deliver other infrastructure improvements to support development including education, health, energy, water, and green space
- The need to make it easier to walk and cycle and enable opportunities for leisure and sport, to help people live healthier lifestyles
- We need to improve the design and landscaping of new buildings and places, conserve the best of the past and improve the natural environment – including Greenheart - to help make the borough a more pleasant place to live in and work
- The need to protect the Green Belt
- The need to help people adapt to climate change, use less energy and make less waste in order to live more sustainable lives.

2.3. We consulted the following people and bodies:

- Specific consultation bodies including the Coal Authority, the Environment Agency, English Heritage, the Canal and Rivers Trust, Natural England, Network Rail, the Highways Agency, adjoining local authorities, the Primary care Trust, the Homes and Communities Agency and the relevant gas, sewerage and water undertakers.
- General consultation bodies including those representing voluntary groups, racial, ethnic or national groups, religious groups, disabled persons and those representing businesses in the area.
- Those with which we had a duty to co-operate, as specified in the regulations.
- Those who had been engaged in the preparation of the Core Strategy.
- Those who had been engaged in the preparation of the Wigan Central Area Action Plan, which is being incorporated into the work on this plan.

2.4. The consultation ran for 6 weeks from Wednesday 30 October to Wednesday 11 December 2013. Letters and/or emails were sent out to inform residents and stakeholders of the consultation and a press release was issued to publicise the process.

2.5. A dedicated web page was set up to provide information and included a link to the online consultation portal which had a short survey questionnaire to elicit responses.

### **3. Comments received and our responses**

3.1. A list of all those who submitted representations is given at Appendix 1. A breakdown of our responses to the issues raised during consultations is set out in separate appendices attached to this Consultation Report, as listed in the contents page. Each appendix is headed by one of the 11 key issues that we identified, to which the comments within relate. In addition, there are 2 further appendices dealing respectively with other comments received and those from neighbouring and other Greater Manchester councils.

3.2. The majority of responses received relate to housing, transport and infrastructure capacity issues.

- 3.3. A significant number of the responses have raised concerns over the level of housing proposed in the borough, particularly the appropriateness of large scale development in specific areas, notably at Standish, Golborne and Lowton, Atherton and Bryn. The impact of new housing on traffic and local infrastructure including schools, health facilities and open space were common themes raised, many citing a need to resolve existing infrastructure issues before new development is considered.
- 3.4. Other key issues raised include the need to protect and enhance accessibility to the borough's green spaces; focusing new development on previously developed sites; and the need to improve our town and local centres.

#### **4. What happens next?**

- 4.1. All the representations received have been considered and any suggestions or proposals judged to have merit will be used to inform the on-going process of plan preparation.
- 4.2. The next stage of preparing the plan is the options and preferred approaches stage. This will consider what the options are for addressing the identified issues in terms of site allocations and development management policies, and what the council's preferred approach or approaches are to resolving these issues. This stage will be the subject of a further consultation exercise so as to proactively engage with a wide section of the community. This will ensure that, as far as possible, it reflects a collective vision and agreed priorities for the sustainable development of the area.

## Appendix 1

### List of all persons and organisations submitting representations

Ref. No.	Consultee		
APL1	Mr Ken Speakman	APL42	Mrs Joanne Scott
APL2	Mr Geoffrey Linford	APL51	Rev Lynne Readett
APL3	Mr Ray Woodbridge	APL44	Mr Brian Jones
APL4	Mr Thomas Winrow	APL46	Mrs Mary Haynes
APL12	Mr David Graham	APL47	Mr Paul Mason
APL9	Mr Peter Clark	APL48	Mr Chris Thompson
APL5	Mrs Kate Rhys	APL49	Mr Barry Pringle
APL7	Mr Andrew Platt	APL50	Mrs Rosemary Smith
APL6	Mrs Jennifer Farley	APL52	Mr John Hajnrych
APL8	Mr. Derek Todd	APL53	Mr Tony Handley
APL10	Mr Ian Mathison	APL54	Mr David Gallagher
APL11	Mr Robert Halliwell	APL56	Mr Jim Simpson
APL23	B Tarbuck	APL57	Dr Sheila Shaw
APL26	Environment Agency	APL90	English Heritage
APL21	Mr Peter Hughes	APL89	Network Rail
APL18	Mrs F.G Hields	APL113	Alison Truman
APL24	Mr Johnathan Mellor	APL115	Acland Bracewell Surveyors
APL14	Mr Thomas Mellors	APL85	Mr Carl Morgan
APL20	Mr Adam Fielding	APL111	Rose Freeman
APL27	Civil Aviation Authority	APL119	Shevington Parish Council
APL15	Mr James Wright	APL120	Persimmon Homes (North West) Ltd
APL16	Mr Steven Prescott	APL117	Salford City Council
APL17	Mrs Brenda Simm	APL109	Transport for Greater Manchester
APL19	Mrs Muriel Fowler	APL110	Ms Yvonne Fovargue
APL22	Mr Neil Wade	APL62	Mrs Glenys McClellan
APL25	Miss Natalie Sweeney	APL112	Seddon Homes Ltd
APL28	Mr Frank Hayes	APL126	B.M Gaskell
APL55	Mr Shaun Sumner	APL100	Mr William Hetherington
APL58	Mrs Jean Pinion	APL78	Oldham Council
APL35	B K Hodgkinson	APL107	Mr Michael Lowry
APL32	Mrs Irena Gillette	APL125	Leigh Ornithological Society
APL31	Ms Jillian Nye	APL82	Mr Philip Gill
APL59	Jeff Wignall	APL75	Mrs A. J. Smith
APL45	John Stuart Hodgson	APL71	John Ellison
APL61	Marion Lawton	APL67	R Knight
APL60	Martin Dobb	APL77	Mr Colin Kedward
APL30	Mr Nick Roberts	APL106	Mr Eric Miller
APL29	Mr. Roger Unsworth	APL96	Mr Michael Howard
APL33	Mrs Angela Bland	APL97	Bertha Maliczewski
APL34	Mr Paul Green	APL94	Mrs M Howard
APL36	Mr Kenneth Moore	APL127	Mr T Holcroft
APL37	Mrs Nicola Rogers	APL98	Mr JA Smollett
APL38	Mr Anthony Pilgrim	APL104	C A Henshall
APL39	Mr. Brandon Hilton	APL72	Mr M Robinson
APL40	Mrs Margaret McIntyre	APL64	Richard Baxendale
APL41	Mrs Margaret Pithie	APL118	Ms Heather Norton
		APL93	Mr Brian Jones

<b>Ref. No.</b>	<b>Consultee</b>
APL76	Dr Yvonne Moogan
APL92	Ms Joyce Ashurst
APL79	Mrs Caroline Roberts
APL80	Mrs E Baldwin
APL81	Mrs L Smith
APL88	Mr Jones
APL83	Bolton Council
APL84	Mr. Alan Holgate
APL87	Mrs Melanie Day
APL91	Miss Christine Burrows
APL95	Mr Geoffrey Barlow
APL103	Mr Trevor Higson
APL99	Mrs Elizabeth Mole
APL101	Mr Philip Massey
APL102	Mr Chris Meadows
APL108	Mr Mark Stringfellow
APL114	Betafence Limited
APL116	Mr Kevin Usher
APL128	Coal Authority
APL129	Greater Manchester Local Enterprise Partnership
APL130	P Smith



## **APPENDIX 2: Focus of development issues**

**The need to focus development primarily on Wigan, Ince, Hindley, Platt Bridge, Leigh, Atherton, Tyldesley and Astley and also Golborne, Lowton and Standish**

**Development should be spread equally across the borough. It is not equitable to focus 80% in the east west core.**

The principle of focusing development primarily towards the east-west core of the borough has been established in the Core Strategy. Development will be directed towards the east-west core in order to achieve transformational regeneration in the areas where most of our economic and social deprivation is concentrated and where our environment is most degraded. Development in these areas will also help to diversify the borough's housing offer and contribute significantly towards the delivery of much needed new and improved transport infrastructure which will enhance east-west connectivity across the borough. Spreading development equally across the borough would not achieve these social, economic and environmental objectives.

**Should concentrate on the lower and middle parts of the housing market where need is greatest, rather than the top end which will look after itself.**

Over 80% of new housing will be directed towards the east-west core where economic and social deprivation is concentrated. Less than one fifth of homes will be directed outside the east west core including just 8% in Golborne and Lowton and 7% in Standish.

**Hindley, Leigh, Atherton, Tyldesley and Astley are already densely populated and have had extensive housing development over the last 20 years.**

These areas are all located within the east-west core of the borough and contain large areas of land with significant housing potential. The principle of significant housing development within the broad locations of South of Hindley, East of Atherton and Garrett Hall has been established in the Core Strategy.

**Too many homes are focused in Golborne and Lowton. Very few homes are planned in Billinge, Winstanley and Appley Bridge and none in the Green Belt.**

Only 8% of the borough's housing requirement is proposed in Golborne and Lowton to 2026. There are few opportunities for new development in Winstanley, Billinge and Appley Bridge as these settlements are constrained significantly by the Green Belt. The release of land in the Green Belt to address housing need was considered during the preparation of the Core Strategy and deemed inappropriate due to the availability of suitable non-Green Belt sites.

## **APPENDIX 3: Strategic location issues**

### **The need to capitalise on the borough's strategic location at the heart of the North West**

**No way can Wigan Borough be called the heart of the North West. The existing road network and public transport networks do not encourage people to think of it as being the heart of the North West. These need to be improved before more homes are built.**

Wigan is located at the heart of the North West, well positioned midway between the two major cities of Manchester and Liverpool and the third city-region of Central Lancashire, and is well served by national strategic transport routes. The M6 and West Coast Mainline pass through the borough, and Manchester and Liverpool Airports are within a 35 minute drive. The borough is also bounded by the M61, M58 and the A580 East Lancashire Road. We recognise that there is a need to improve the local road network and public transport connections in the borough and are committed to promoting and seeking the delivery of strategic transport infrastructure interventions to improve accessibility to key destinations both within and outside the borough.

**To capitalise on the borough's strategic location, emphasis should extend beyond the east-west core to include those areas with easy access to the M6, M61 and M58 and therefore of interest to commuters i.e. Golborne, Lowton and Standish.**

New homes are proposed outside the east-west core, including around 1,000 in Golborne and Lowton and 1,000 in Standish.

## **APPENDIX 4: Housing issues**

**The need to allocate land for around 15,000 new homes, with an appropriate mix of house types, sizes, tenures and affordability, to ensure that people have somewhere to live.**

### **Too many homes are proposed**

**There is a need for new housing in the borough, but not at the scale proposed. Once the 15,000 homes have been built there will come a demand for another 20,000. There must be a limit.**

The requirement for a net increase of 15,000 homes has been established in the Core Strategy. It has been accepted by a planning inspector based on robust evidence, including the Government's own population forecasts and household projections and the Greater Manchester Forecasting Model. The need arises from both an increasing population and a falling average household size. The increasing population is principally as a result of births exceeding deaths. Household sizes are continuing to decline due to family breakdowns and people living longer in their own homes.

**There is no need for 15,000 new homes until a sustained effort to attract more work into the area has been achieved. The housing will only be occupied by commuters.**

The need for 15,000 new homes has been established in the Core Strategy, supported by robust evidence. A strategic objective of the Core Strategy is to modernise and grow the borough's economy with more and better skilled jobs, within a range of key employment sectors. We are currently carrying out a review of the borough's employment land which will assess the suitability of existing sites and examine the need for new ones. This review will inform our detailed position.

**We need to know exactly where the houses are proposed to be built and what new and improved infrastructure is proposed.**

The Allocations and Development Management Local Plan will determine the proposed location of new homes and the new and improved infrastructure that is needed.

### **Brownfield sites and empty homes**

**There needs to be a commitment to regenerating brownfield sites rather than taking up precious green land.**

All previously developed sites in the borough that are suitable and developable for housing have been identified in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment as having potential for housing. They have therefore been taken into account in meeting future demand. We estimate that such previously developed sites could accommodate around two-thirds of the overall housing requirement to 2026. As such, around one-third of the overall requirement will need to be accommodated on greenfield land, including around 1,000 homes at the broad locations in Standish and Golborne and Lowton. Due to viability issues as a result of the current economic climate, greenfield sites in Standish, Golborne and Lowton are coming forward first to address short term housing need, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework.

**Local and Central Governments should provide incentives to ensure that brownfield sites are developed before active farmland.**

Encouraging the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), is one of the twelve core planning principles identified in the National Planning Policy Framework that should underpin both plan-making and

decision making. In accordance with this, Policy CP6 of the Wigan Core Strategy encourages new housing on brownfield land. However, the National Planning Policy Framework also requires local planning authorities to maintain a five year supply of deliverable housing land. It is therefore not always possible, particularly in a weak housing market, to resist greenfield developments where there is an insufficient supply of deliverable brownfield sites to address local housing needs. This is the case in Standish, Golborne and Lowton.

**Some grand old buildings (e.g. silk mill on Mather Lane, Leigh and the former Technical College on Railway Road, Leigh) could be fantastic if converted into flats. This will save space, preserve fine architecture and show pride in the borough's history.**

Various old buildings, including Mather Mill and the former Technical College in Leigh, have been identified in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment as having potential for conversion to housing. These have therefore been taken into account in meeting future demand.

**There are so many homes that are up for sale, empty or in a state of disrepair. These should be refurbished instead of building new homes.**

The council agrees that empty homes should be brought back into use as soon as possible in order to improve the supply of housing. However, bringing large numbers of empty homes back into use before new homes are built is not feasible. Vacant properties are a feature in any housing market and aid the overall functioning of the market. It would therefore be inappropriate to off-set current vacant homes against the housing requirements. In terms of long term empty homes as a proportion of the overall stock, Wigan compares favourably to the Greater Manchester and the North West averages.

**Wigan is one of the worst areas for repossessions. Use these homes as well.**

Repossessions peaked in 2007/08 and have been falling since and are at relatively low levels.

#### **Housing needs:**

**There is a need for housing and facilities to meet the needs of an ageing population and also the needs of families, single people, children and young adults.**

The council is committed to providing an appropriate mix of house types, sizes, tenures and affordability, specialist and extra care homes to address housing needs, as set out in Policy CP6 of the Core Strategy. The borough's housing needs are being established in a Strategic Housing Market Assessment which is anticipated for completion in Spring 2014. This will inform the Allocations and Development Management Local Plan and will identify the mix of housing and the range of tenures that the local population is likely to need to 2026. This will include the needs of different groups in the community, such as, but not limited to, families with children, older people, people with disabilities and single people.

**There is a need for affordable energy-efficient housing to meet the needs of residents on low incomes, particularly given the rapidly increasing cost of energy.**

New homes have to meet Part L of the Building Regulations which requires certain standards of energy efficiency. It is likely that any new dwellings covered by the Allocations and Development Management Local Plan would therefore have to be 'zero carbon' which means they will have to be highly energy efficient. However, as

well as this we will explore ways of making energy provision more sustainable and secure for residents, as set out in Policy CP13 of the Core Strategy.

**There is a need for extra care villages to address the ageing population, and to put the emphasis of care, independent living and governance locally in the community.**

Addressing the housing and care needs of an ageing population in the borough has been identified as a strategic priority for the council. We are working with public and private partners to increase the delivery of specialist homes, including extra-care accommodation.

#### **Standish:**

**More homes in Standish will result in gridlock and overstretched local services and facilities. The Plan needs a fundamental solution to these traffic and infrastructure problems.**

We have prepared an Infrastructure Assessment for Standish (November 2013) to inform our decision-making on planning applications for housing development. The assessment has considered the impact of 1,000 homes in Standish on a range of infrastructure types including transport, education, health, open space and recreation, community facilities and utilities. It has concluded that the impact of the development on the local transport network is the most fundamental consideration.

However, based on traffic modelling undertaken by Transport for Greater Manchester's Highways Forecasting and Analytical Services, it concludes that the local road network can accommodate an additional 1,000 homes, subject to the provision of significant new transport interventions. These will be delivered by the developments or by financial contributions from the developers as appropriate. Other non-transport infrastructure requirements can be met through financial contributions based upon the number of homes proposed (a cost per dwelling).

#### **Golborne and Lowton:**

**Major improvements to local infrastructure are needed before new housing is considered. The roads and existing services will not be able to cope.**

The Infrastructure Assessment for Golborne and Lowton (November 2013) identifies the infrastructure required to support the delivery of 1,000 new homes in Golborne and Lowton. This includes significant transport infrastructure including junction improvements, a new link road and new and improved public transport and walking and cycling provision. These will be delivered by the developments or by financial contributions from the developers as appropriate.

**No-one will want to live in Lowton when they build HS2.**

It is not anticipated that HS2 will have that impact.

#### **South of Atherton:**

**Development at South of Atherton will destroy the community and take away our basic human right to access the countryside within walking distance. It should be maintained and included within Greenheart as it is valuable much-wanted green space.**

Whilst the Inspector at the Core Strategy Examination concluded that land South of Atherton was not needed to meet housing needs in the short term to 2016, it may be needed to meet housing needs later in the plan period to 2026. Development of the site would be in line with the spatial strategy in that it is a site safeguarded for future development and is located within the east-west core of the borough. If the site is

allocated for housing development, the council will work closely with the developer to ensure that it is designed sympathetically, provides areas of good quality public open space and maintains good pedestrian access into the surrounding countryside, with links into Greenheart.

**The local infrastructure will not be able to cope with large scale development south of Atherton.**

Our Initial Transport Assessment (July 2012) concludes that whilst sustainable transport improvements and a new link road through the site would reduce traffic impact, large scale housing development south of Atherton would increase peak time car borne trips to/from the B5215, B5235, A579 and A577 junctions, resulting in a slight increase in congestion in the Atherton and Tyldesley areas. More detailed transport assessments and an assessment into the capacity of other local infrastructure such as school and health provision will need to be undertaken to assess the site's suitability for allocation.

**Landgate, Bryn:**

**It is not clear whether the proposed homes include development at the broad location at Landgate.**

As stated in Core Strategy Policy SP4, the broad location at Landgate will be allocated in the Allocations Plan for a mix of housing and employment development and will contribute towards the total of 15,000 homes needed in the borough.

**Local facilities will be overstretched if development takes place at Landgate. There is only one doctor's surgery, one play group and 2 primary schools in Bryn. There are also unoccupied flats near the motorway junction.**

The principle of a mixed development including approximately 300 homes at Landgate has been established in the Core Strategy. There is sufficient school capacity in the locality to accommodate this level of growth.

**Housing supply and target:**

**There is a need to ensure that a 5 year supply of deliverable housing land is maintained throughout the plan period.**

We will allocate sufficient land in the Allocations and Development Management Local Plan to accommodate the borough's housing requirements and update our Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment annually to identify our 5 year land supply position. The council will work closely with developers and landowners to assist housing delivery on suitable housing sites. However, ultimately their delivery is outside our control and is dependent on the housing market and developers' building programmes.

**Policy CP6 of the Core Strategy confirms that the housing target for the Borough is a minimum by seeking to deliver *'at least 1,000 net additional dwellings per year.'* This is not reflected by the Key Issues document which instead targets *'around 15,000 homes'*.**

Given that some of these homes will have been built or commenced before the adoption of the Allocations Plan, they will not all need to be allocated. As such, the statement 'around 15,000 homes' suffices.

**Housing allocations must be deemed to be deliverable otherwise the housing target will not be met. It is therefore critical that viability and market conditions are considered.**

The viability of potential housing sites and market conditions has been considered as part of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. Only sites deemed to be available, suitable and deliverable in accordance with the definitions set by government have been included in the borough's 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites.

**Consideration should be given to ensure that sites are technically capable of being able to deliver the number of homes proposed. It is not uncommon for Local Authorities to estimate development yields based on the gross area of a site rather than the net developable area leading to over estimated assumptions of delivery.**

A density multiplier has been applied to the net developable area of all sites without planning permission identified in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. All identified hazards and constraints have been removed from the developable area. In cases where the developable area equals the total site area, no hazard or constraints have been identified that will impact upon site capacity.

**While the figure of 15,000 homes is derived from the adopted Core Strategy, the figure does not account for past under delivery of housing or provide flexibility to ensure that sufficient housing numbers are delivered in the borough over the plan period. Sites for more than 15,000 therefore need to be allocated to meet NPPF requirements.**

In accordance with national planning policy, the council has identified in its Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment a sufficient supply of deliverable housing sites to provide 5 years worth of housing against the housing requirement of 1,000 per annum, with an additional buffer of 20% to ensure choice and competition in the market and to reflect previous persistent under delivery. The SHLAA also identifies a sufficient supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for years 6-15.

**Sites designated as broad locations in the Core Strategy and safeguarded sites within the east west core should be the first priority for allocation where they are available, suitable and deliverable.**

All sites will be considered on their own merits. However, sites which are available, suitable and deliverable, located within the east-west core of the borough and consistent with the spatial strategy as set in Policy SP1 of the Core Strategy will be considered favourably.

**Sites capable of providing a mix of house types, sizes, tenures and across various affordability ranges should be encouraged and considered for allocation.**

The capability of a site to provide a mix of house types, sizes, tenures and various affordability ranges is a material consideration in favour of its suitability for allocation. However, this is just one consideration and other factors such as deliverability, location and amenity also need to be taken into account.

#### **Other housing issues:**

**What is the current status of the plan? Is the council committed to building 15,000 new properties in the borough and, if so, where will these sites be?**

The preparation of the Allocations and Development Management Plan is at an early stage. We have undertaken this consultation to invite people to tell us what this plan

ought to contain and what the key issues it needs to address are. The Plan needs to be in line with the Core Strategy which commits the Council to make provision for at least 15,000 new dwellings to meet local needs. The Allocations and Development Management Plan will therefore allocate a sufficient amount of land for these new homes. In accordance with the Core Strategy, at least 80% of new homes will be focused in the east-west core of the borough.

**The objectives are jointly important and co-dependent i.e. new houses without the transport, school, green space, health and road infrastructure jointly developed will ensure that the borough fails to deliver on its aspirations.**

The provision of required new and improved infrastructure to support new housing development is imperative.

**“An appropriate mix” of housing is very vague.**

We are currently preparing a Strategic Housing Market Assessment. This will establish the housing needs of the borough and inform the mix of housing types, sizes, tenures and affordability that is needed over the plan period to 2026. The council will seek the provision of 25% affordable housing on all sites consisting of 10 dwellings or more.

**The local culture and personality of places needs to be maintained.**

Policy CP10 of the Core Strategy commits the council to improving the built environment of the borough by ensuring that, as appropriate, new development respects and acknowledges the character and identity of the borough and its locality, in terms of the materials, siting, size, scale and details used; is integrated effectively with its surroundings and meets established standards for design.

**Wigan is being regenerated at the expense of small towns like Atherton and Tyldesley.**

This is not the case. Development is distributed across many settlements in the borough with only approximately one quarter of new homes and new employment development directed to Wigan. The Core Strategy directs development primarily towards the east-west core of the borough in order to achieve transformational regeneration and create attractive places for people to live and businesses to locate and thrive. The towns of Atherton and Tyldesley are both located within the east-west core and significant regeneration is planned, notably within the broad locations of East of Atherton and Garrett Hall.

**Does your plan also include the land around the canal on Plank Lane which was earmarked for the construction of housing at least 5 years ago?**

This site is identified in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment as an available, suitable and deliverable housing site with capacity for around 500 homes. The site is primarily in the ownership of Wigan Council and the Canals and Rivers Trust. A planning application for housing development is anticipated in 2014.

**The need to allocate land for homes and business appears to contradict the need to protect the Green Belt and open space, help people live healthier lifestyles and improve the natural environment.**

All local authorities are required to allocate land for new housing and employment development to meet local needs. We aim to focus at least 80% of new housing in the east-west core of the borough, encourage development on previously developed brownfield land (including the re-use of existing buildings) and not release any Green Belt for housing development. As set out in Policy CP2 of the Core Strategy, we are also committed to protecting and enhancing valuable open spaces, sporting and



recreational facilities including the borough's parks, allotment provision, Local Nature Reserves and other natural and semi-natural greenspace.

**The Plan should ensure that housing areas include facilities for the population, not just housing like at Winstanley and Hawkley Hall.**

The council will work closely with developers to ensure that new large scale housing developments provide easy access to key local services including convenience shopping facilities and health care by walking and cycling. This has been achieved on recent large planning applications at North Leigh and the former Westwood power station site where new local facilities are proposed.

**There needs to be more emphasis on housing affordability.**

Housing affordability is a key issue. We require the provision of 25% affordable housing on all sites consisting of 10 dwellings or more where this is viable. This level of affordable housing provision and the threshold are identified in Policy CP6 of the Core Strategy and have been subject to consultation and deemed appropriate by the Planning Inspector.

**Make it easier to convert unwanted shops into dwellings and encourage shops and pubs to convert upper floors to residential.**

New permitted development rights introduced in October 2012 allow up to two flats to be created above shops in office or storage space without the need for planning permission. Where appropriate, the council will support the change of use of shops to dwellings where there is an identified need for additional housing in the area and where evidence demonstrates that continued retail use is unviable or inappropriate.

**The council should stop the sale of council houses.**

'Right to Buy' is a national policy and is a statutory right for qualifying tenants.

**There is a need to review employment sites and release those that are no longer suitable for future employment uses where they could instead make a positive contribution towards the housing need for the area.**

We are currently preparing an Employment Land Review which will assess the suitability of the borough's existing employment sites for continued employment use. Those deemed to be inappropriate for employment uses will be considered for non-employment uses including housing. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment has already identified a number of existing employment sites as potential housing sites, including the former Westwood power station site off Poolstock Lane, Gateway House on Standishgate, and the former household waste recycling centre on Frog Lane.

**Proposed housing allocations:**

**The following housing sites are proposed for allocation in the Allocations and Development Management Plan.**

- **Green Belt land south of Tan House Drive, Winstanley**
- **Land at Pepper Lane, Standish**
- **Land at Pocket Nook Lane, Lowton**
- **Land at Walmsley Farm, Green Lane / Queensway, Leigh**
- **Land at Standish Golf Club, Rectory Lane, Standish**
- **Land at Hooten Gardens, Bettison Avenue, Leigh**

- **Land at Moor Lane Farm, Ashton**
- **Land at Fairhurst Lane, off Chorley Road, Standish**
- **Land at Rectory Lane, Standish, in ownership of Ainscough Strategic Land.**
- **Land south of Atherton**
- **Land east of Atherton**

We will give due consideration to these sites for allocation in the Plan.

## **APPENDIX 5: Employment issues**

### **The need to allocate around 200 hectares of land for businesses to safeguard jobs and help create new jobs**

#### **Should the emphasis be on reusing brownfield land and existing employment areas, rather than providing new employment sites?**

We are carrying out a review of existing employment sites to assess their suitability for current and future employment use and this will inform proposals in the Allocations Plan. The adopted Core Strategy identifies that for Wigan to compete successfully, sites of the right quality are needed to attract, maintain and grow businesses.

#### **We need to create employment opportunities for local people.**

Agreed. Policy CP5 of the adopted Core Strategy sets out how we will work with local employers and developers to maximise the benefits of employment development for local people.

#### **Is there a need for 200 hectares of new employment land within the borough?**

The council's adopted Core Strategy identifies the requirement for 200 hectares of new employment land over the plan period to 2026. As part of the evidence base, a review of current and potential employment sites is being carried out that will identify suitable employment sites for inclusion within the plan.

#### **The plan should have more emphasis on industry and not just housing.**

Housing and employment will both be important elements of the plan.

#### **There is a need to take advantage of the upturn in the economy and allocate land close to the M6 Motorway that will be attractive to the market**

The council's Employment Land Review will examine the potential for new employment sites and will inform the proposals in the Allocations Plan.

#### **It is important to focus on youth unemployment and create opportunities for younger people.**

The council's adopted Core Strategy sets out the policy approach to providing employment opportunities for local people and we recognise that youth unemployment is a very important issue. Whilst the plan process can help to create employment opportunities, this issue needs to be addressed by a range of policy initiatives beyond the statutory plan process.

#### **Some existing employment sites are no longer suitable for continued employment use e.g. the former Betafence site on Woodhouse Lane, Wigan and they may be more suitable for alternative uses.**

It is important that employment sites and premises meet the needs of current and future employers. An Employment Land Review is currently being undertaken to assess the suitability of existing employment areas for continued employment use, or if alternative uses may be more appropriate on specific sites. This work will inform proposals within the Allocations Plan and will also be a material consideration in the assessment of any planning applications for alternative uses on existing employment sites.

#### **Support for a mixed-use allocation on land at Landgate, Bryn.**

Support welcomed. Land at Landgate is identified as a Broad Location for New Development within the adopted Core Strategy. Mixed-use development, including new employment buildings is likely to be the most viable type of development on this

site. As part of the work on the Allocations and Development Management Plan we will work closely with landowners, potential developers and local residents to ensure development on the site provides jobs and other benefits to the local community.

**The plan needs to reflect the priorities of the Greater Manchester Local Enterprise Partnership, including "reshaping our economy to reflect new global demands".**

Agreed.

**Support for a specific site allocation, including employment land, at East of Atherton.**

Support welcomed. Land East of Atherton is identified as a Broad Location for New Development within the adopted Core Strategy. It is envisaged that this will comprise a mixture of employment and housing with associated landscaping. The council will work with site owners, potential developers and the local community to bring forward a proposal for a mixed-use development that provides benefits to the local community.

**Support for the allocation of around 200 hectares of employment land as identified within the Core Strategy. It is important to allocate sites that can be delivered within the plan period.**

In line with the adopted Core Strategy, the Allocations and Development Management Plan will identify future employment sites of the right type and quality, and which are attractive to the market.

**An assessment of the borough's existing employment sites and premises is needed before new industrial units are developed. A lot of existing units are vacant or derelict.**

We are currently preparing an Employment Land Review which will assess the suitability of the borough's existing employment sites for continued employment use. Those deemed to be inappropriate for employment uses will be considered for non-employment uses including housing, as part of the Allocations Plan. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment has already identified a number of existing employment sites as potential housing sites.

## **APPENDIX 6: Town and local centre issues**

### **The need to help Wigan, Leigh and Ashton and our other town and local centres provide what people want.**

**There is a concern over the level of shop vacancies in Wigan town centre and the impact of these on the centre.**

We regularly monitor retail vacancies within our town centres and this helps to inform planning policy. The Allocations and Development Management Plan will include detailed policies and proposals for Wigan town centre and will identify specific areas for redevelopment and improvement that will strengthen the role of the centre.

### **Town centres need to provide what local people want.**

Current local and national planning policies support a wide range of acceptable uses within town centres. The plan will identify specific town centre areas or sites for development which will help to meet identified needs.

**There is a need to focus on Ashton-in-Makerfield town centre as well as other town centres within the borough.**

Ashton is identified as a Main Town Centre within Policy SP2 of the adopted Core Strategy. The policy states that it will be enhanced as the focus for a range of town centre uses serving the south-west of the borough. The Allocations and Development Management Plan will consider if there are any specific development opportunities within the Ashton town centre area.

**The plan should focus on improving the borough's town centres, including Leigh, to make them more attractive and improve job opportunities**

Policy SP2 of the adopted Core Strategy sets out the strategic approach to regeneration of our town centres, including Leigh, which is identified as a Main Town Centre. The Allocations and Development Management Plan will consider new development opportunities in town centre areas, including Leigh, and will examine what opportunities may be provided through the construction of the new Guided Busway.

**The focus on Wigan, Leigh and Ashton town centres will be to the detriment of other centres such as Atherton and Tyldesley.**

Policy SP2 of the adopted Core Strategy sets out the hierarchy of town centres within the borough and identifies Wigan as the Principal Town Centre, along with Leigh and Ashton as the Main Town Centres within the borough. However, the policy also identifies Atherton and Tyldesley, together with a number of areas, as Other Town Centres which will still have an important role providing a range of services for their local communities.

Work on the Allocations and Development Management Plan will consider if there are any specific opportunities for investment and improvement within these other town centres. With specific regard to Atherton and Tyldesley, significant investment will be taking place in these areas during this year as part of the Guided Busway works.

**The plan should review the regeneration potential of town and local centres**

The plan will review the boundaries of town and local centres within the borough and will identify any opportunities for development and regeneration within these areas.

**We should restrict the number of hot food takeaways within town centres, including Hindley.**

The council has Supplementary Planning Guidance on Hot Food Takeaways, which provides advice on how planning applications for such uses are assessed.

**There is a need to regenerate Atherton town centre and consider the future of parts of the shopping area.**

The plan will review the boundary of Atherton town centre and will identify any areas of opportunity, where new uses can potentially be introduced.

**Support for a mixed-use allocation on land at Darlington Street East / Warrington Road, Wigan**

The site is within the Eastern Gateway Area of Opportunity identified within the previous Wigan Central Area Action Plan Issues Paper. The Eastern Gateway is still an important regeneration priority for the council and we will work with the site owners and potential developers to consider development opportunities for this site as part of our work on the Allocations and Development Management Plan.

**Need to focus development on brownfield sites and derelict buildings before building on new land in town centres**

National and local planning policy supports a wide range of uses within existing town centres, including housing where appropriate. Within the borough's town centres, the vast majority of available sites are brownfield, previously developed sites. In this situation, any development proposals that are put forward as part of the Allocations Plan are likely to involve the re-use or 'recycling' of existing sites.

## **APPENDIX 7: Transport issues**

**The need to deliver strategic transport infrastructure interventions to make it easier for people and businesses to access what they need.**

### **General:**

**Traffic and infrastructure are the most fundamental issues. Work needs to be done to improve the road network before more houses are built. The Plan must include meaningful improvements to the road network.**

As set out in Policy CP7 of the Core Strategy, the council is promoting and seeking the delivery of six major transport infrastructure interventions during the plan period to 2026. Their delivery is vital to achieving the level and pattern of growth envisaged in the borough. The interventions range from public transport projects to road schemes. These will improve accessibility to key destinations and connect people to opportunities both within and outside the borough. As set out in Policy SP4, developers building within the broad locations for new development at Standish, Golborne and Lowton, South of Hindley, and Landgate will be required to provide significant road infrastructure to mitigate the impact of development.

### **Golborne and Lowton:**

**Due to the proximity of the East Lancashire Road, the road network in Golborne and Lowton is unable to cope with existing levels of traffic, particularly at peak times. 1,000 new homes will bring the area to a standstill.**

The Infrastructure Assessment for Golborne and Lowton (November 2013) identifies the infrastructure required to support the delivery of 1,000 new homes in Golborne and Lowton. This includes significant transport infrastructure including junction improvements, a new link road and new and improved public transport and walking and cycling provision. The assessment will inform the council's decision making on planning applications for housing development within the broad location. The schemes will be delivered by the developments or by financial contributions from the developers as appropriate.

**A small incident on the M6, M62, M56, M61 or M60 results in a standstill on the A580 East Lancashire Road and the local road network.**

By working closely with the Highways Agency and other authorities we continually aim to improve the efficiency and safety of the road network, reducing, as far as is practicable, the adverse impact of incidents.

**Public transport links to Manchester, Liverpool, Warrington and Wigan are very poor. People have no alternative option but to use the car. The nearest train station at Newton-le-Willows is difficult to access due to traffic. Warrington is a key employment destination and only has two irregular bus services from Lowton.**

In order to improve the accessibility of specific development sites and to encourage the use of public transport, it may be necessary to divert existing bus services, extend hours of operation or provide additional bus services to key destinations. This will need to be assessed on a site by site basis. Newton-le-Willows station provides frequent rail services into Warrington, Liverpool and Manchester, but it suffers from a lack of parking provision. Further work will be required with Network Rail, Transport for Greater Manchester and Merseytravel to help ensure bus connections serve the passenger demands to and from the station.

**The Plan should include a full detailed review of traffic issues within Lowton including by-pass plans around Lane Head. This could alleviate traffic congestion and stop commuter traffic passing through.**

The Infrastructure Assessment for Golborne and Lowton (November 2013) identifies the infrastructure required to support the delivery of 1,000 new homes in Golborne and Lowton. This includes significant transport infrastructure including improvements at the A580/B5207, A572/B5207 and A580/A572 junctions. These will be delivered by the developments or by financial contributions from the developers as appropriate. A bypass for the Lane Head area is unlikely to be provided in the foreseeable future due to funding constraints and the benefits arising from other road scheme priorities in the borough.

#### **Standish:**

**The road network in Standish is too congested and cannot cope with existing volumes of traffic, due primarily to the proximity of the M6. 1,000 new homes will exacerbate this. A fundamental solution to the traffic problems is needed before any new homes are considered. This could include a bypass from M6 Junction 27 to the Boars Head roundabout; a ring road around Standish; or a new junction on the M6 to serve Wigan without the need to drive through Standish.**

Our Infrastructure Assessment for Standish (November 2013) identifies the infrastructure required to support the delivery of 1,000 new homes in Standish. It concludes that the local road network can accommodate an additional 1,000 new homes subject to the provision of significant new transport interventions delivered by the developments, or by financial contributions from the developers as appropriate. These interventions include new link roads and junction improvements at Boars Head and Red Rock Lane. A new bypass, ring road or motorway junction is extremely unlikely to be provided in the foreseeable future due to funding constraints and the benefits arising from other road scheme priorities in the borough.

**The recent tinkering with the phasing of the traffic lights at Standish crossroads will not make significant improvements to the present problems, never mind potential future ones.**

We are constantly re-evaluating traffic signal timings and employing the latest technology to ensure that signalled junctions, such as in Standish centre, operate as efficiently as possible for all road users.

**The railway bridge on Rectory Lane, the canal bridge at Red Rock and the congested traffic lights at Standish crossroads all present major hindrances to free-flowing traffic.**

Agreed. The Infrastructure Assessment for Standish confirms that the junctions at Red Rock canal bridge and Standish crossroads are operating at or above capacity at peak times.

**Building in excess of 600 houses from Rectory Lane will cause significant congestion as it is a narrow road constrained by a narrow railway bridge and traffic signals at both ends.**

As set out in the Infrastructure Assessment for Standish, developments within the broad location will be required to deliver significant new and improved road infrastructure to mitigate the impact of development on the local road network. At Rectory Lane, this could include a new link road onto Grove Lane which will help to disperse traffic and provide an alternative to Rectory Lane.



**The suggestion of an island at Boars Head will only create more traffic problems of queuing traffic.**

Traffic modelling undertaken by Transport for Greater Manchester's Highways Forecasting and Analytical Service in 2013 concluded that 1,000 additional homes could be accommodated in Standish subject to the provision of significant new transport interventions, including traffic signals at Boars Head roundabout.

#### **Atherton:**

**The road network in Atherton is unable to cope with existing levels of traffic. The main road should be made two-way again. New homes to the south of Atherton will bring traffic to a standstill.**

Our Initial Transport Assessment (July 2012) concludes that whilst sustainable transport improvements and a new link road through the site would reduce traffic impact, large scale housing development south of Atherton would increase peak time car borne trips to/from the B5215, B5235, A579 and A577 junctions, resulting in a slight increase in congestion in the Atherton and Tyldesley areas. More detailed transport assessments and an assessment into the capacity of other infrastructure will need to be undertaken to support an allocation of the land.

**Atherton rail station is so overcrowded at peak times that people cannot get onto a train into Manchester or coming home.**

We are continuously working in partnership with Transport for Greater Manchester and public transport operators to significantly improve the public transport offer within the borough and across Greater Manchester. This is a key component of the Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan and our Transport Strategy.

#### **Road infrastructure:**

**Simple roundabouts with pedestrian crossings will alleviate traffic congestion, rather than traffic lights at nearly every junction.**

All types of junction control are considered at relevant locations across the borough and evaluated to determine the optimum provision in terms of land availability, junction efficiency and safety for all road users.

**Do not interfere with the transport infrastructure, remove bus lanes & cycle lanes.**

Our Core Strategy and Transport Strategy seek to maximise use of the existing bus network and improve opportunities for bus travel and interchange, particularly in our town centres and at rail stations. We also seek to develop and enhance our on and off-road networks for cycling, to connect local residents to employment and community facilities as well as for leisure purposes.

#### **Public transport – general**

**If traffic congestion is to be reduced, there needs to be an emphasis on providing new and improved public transport links, particularly on housing estates, to reduce the reliance on people walking and cycling.**

A strategic objective of the Core Strategy is to increase public transport use in the borough by increasing capacity, improving connections and making it a more attractive and feasible alternative to the car. We are continuously working in partnership with Transport for Greater Manchester and public transport operators to significantly improve the public transport offer within the borough and across Greater Manchester. This is a key component of the Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan and our Transport Strategy.

**The cost of public transport needs to be addressed to enable the key issues to be resolved.**

The cost of public transport is set by operators, not the council.

**Bus:**

**Direct bus routes that were in place 20-30 years ago need to be reinstated.**

We are continuously working in partnership with Transport for Greater Manchester and public transport operators to significantly improve the public transport offer within the borough and across Greater Manchester. This is a key component of the Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan and our Transport Strategy.

**Rail:**

**There is a need to increase capacity on the local rail network. The council should continue to lobby train operators and express the need for them to provide extra carriages to cope with demand, notably on the Wigan-Atherton-Manchester line.**

We are continuously working in partnership with Transport for Greater Manchester and public transport operators to significantly improve the public transport offer within the borough and across Greater Manchester. This is a key component of the Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan and our Transport Strategy.

**A rail station is needed in the Leigh area. A railway station is needed at Kenyon to support Leigh and Lowton.**

The Leigh-Salford-Manchester Busway will significantly improve the public transport offer in Leigh when it opens in early 2015. Current bus services connect Leigh to all small and major towns in the local area. Previous and more recent studies undertaken for Transport for Greater Manchester and the council by specialist consultants have concluded that within all new rail station options assessed, overall transport benefits are low compared to the high infrastructure and operational costs of providing a new rail station in the Leigh area and associated new rail services.

**A railway station is needed at Golborne on the West Coast Mainline.**

An independent assessment was undertaken in 2013 to understand the feasibility of re-introducing a rail station in Golborne along the West Coast Main Line. This concluded that there is potential for a new station as the proposed service paths for the Manchester Airport and Scotland service can potentially accommodate an additional stop. The delivery of a new station at Golborne is however dependent on funding (in the region of £10million) being confirmed.

**High Speed 2 (HS2):**

**HS2 is not wanted by local residents. It will devalue our homes and will destroy a Site of Special Scientific Interest and scenic green land with no benefit to the local area.**

HS2 is a proposal of central government not the council. Where a property is not needed for the line, but will be physically affected (e.g. by increased noise, vibration or light pollution), government law allows owner-occupiers to claim for loss of value to their property as a result of these factors.

The Abram Flashes SSSI is located approximately 100 metres from the proposed route. The impact of the route on the SSSI will be assessed in detail when the specific route is proposed.

**The HS2 project must be supported to bring life-blood back into the region. It will benefit the local economy and cultural offer and address the enormous economic and cultural gap between London and the North.**

Noted.

**The Allocations Plan will need to reflect the proposals for HS2 in Golborne and Lowton.**

The Allocations Plan will protect the land needed for HS2.

#### **Walking and cycling:**

**Wigan would benefit from the development of a circular cycle route running around the periphery of the town, similar to the one recently completed in Preston, with radial access to the centre. This could be developed in parallel with an agreeable walking route between different parts of the town.**

The improvement and development of attractive cycling and walking routes into Wigan town centre is identified as one of the priority schemes in our Transport Strategy action plan.

#### **Leigh-Salford-Manchester Busway:**

**The Busway will not improve traffic congestion in Lowton, as it will require passengers to catch a bus into Leigh in order to access the service.**

The Leigh-Salford-Manchester Busway is due to open in early 2015. Development at Golborne and Lowton will provide genuine opportunities to improve public transport access into Manchester, Warrington and Liverpool. These include opportunities for strategic bus service links into the guided busway at Leigh, improved bus services into Newton-le-Willows rail station, and a significant opportunity to support the provision of a rail station at Golborne.

**The Busway is more expensive than providing a rail station in Leigh. A rail system in conjunction with the Metrolink would be a better alternative.**

Previous and more recent studies undertaken for Transport for Greater Manchester and Wigan Council by transport consultants have concluded that within all new rail station options assessed, overall transport benefits are low compared to the high infrastructure and operational costs of providing a new rail station in the Leigh area and associated new rail services.

#### **Supporting motorists:**

**The Plan should commit the council to improving road conditions for motorists.**

The six major transport infrastructure interventions set out in the Core Strategy represent key transport projects which the council considers as being vital to achieving the level and pattern of growth envisaged. The projects range from public transport projects to road schemes which will also involve benefits for walking, cycling and the provision of bus services.

**Strategic transport infrastructure should include provision for private motor vehicles. It is too easy to see motorists as a problem when in fact most people have no alternative. Whilst public transport has its place for local and short distance travel, the use of the private car is important to those who need to travel further to work, or may not be on a convenient public transport route.**

Improving accessibility for all users is a key objective of the Core Strategy and the Transport Strategy. Policy CP7 of the Core Strategy commits the council to promoting and seeking delivery of six major transport infrastructure interventions in the borough.

The delivery of these interventions, which range from public transport projects to major road schemes, will reduce congestion to the benefit of car users.

**Car parks:**

**Additional car parks are needed in town centres. These should be free of charge.**

As part of our transport strategy we will be developing a parking strategy for the borough in which future town centre parking facilities will be a key consideration.

**Other:**

**New homes should be built with off road parking for at least 2 cars per household. Parking on the road should not be allowed to enable a free flow of traffic.**

The council's current car parking standards are set out in saved policy A1S of the Unitary Development Plan. These will be reviewed and updated in preparing the Allocations and Development Management Local Plan.

**An all-ways junction at M6 Junction 25 will improve congestion.**

We have been pursuing the introduction of an all-ways junction at Junction 25 of the M6 motorway for many years but funding has never been available to deliver it. It remains a live issue for the council and the Highways Agency.

**New homes must be accessible by public transport, walkways and cycle lanes to local amenities.**

Our Core Strategy and Transport Strategy seek to maximise use of the existing bus and rail network and improve opportunities for bus travel and interchange. They also seek to develop and enhance our on and off-road networks for walking and cycling, to connect local residents to employment and community facilities as well as for leisure purposes.

**Development should not reduce quality of life and worsen existing traffic congestion.**

The council will ensure that appropriate mitigation measures and new and improved infrastructure are incorporated into new developments to minimise impact on local communities and the local road network as far as is practicable, and to maximise community benefits.

**To open Wigan up to the wider world, a new ring road is needed that allows the transportation of goods quickly in and out of the town.**

The council is currently actively pursuing the development of a link road from the A49 at Goose Green to the Westwood Park development site and town centre. Planning approval for the scheme was granted in 2013.

**In order to ensure that the necessary transport infrastructure is delivered, it may be appropriate to deliver higher levels of development than the Core Strategy proposes. Community Infrastructure Levy and New Homes Bonus payments could help finance improvements that would otherwise be incapable of being delivered.**

The Core Strategy permits the delivery of around 1,000 homes within the broad location at Standish within the plan period to 2026. There is no evidence indicating that the delivery of the necessary transport infrastructure cannot be achieved from this level of development. There is potential for Community Infrastructure Levy and New

Homes Bonus payments to contribute to infrastructure delivery where robust evidence indicates it appropriate.

**Significant care also needs to be taken that any planning permissions granted in advance of the adoption of the Allocations and Development Management Local Plan do not prejudice the ability of infrastructure improvements to be delivered in the future. This is notably the case in Standish. The council's Infrastructure Assessment here identifies a number of improvements to the highways network which could significantly ease existing congestion problems. Yet live applications have already been submitted on some of the areas of Safeguarded Land from which the allocated development sites will be derived. In the short-term, applications should not be approved on these sites unless appropriate provision is made for delivering the required highways connections in the future.**

The Standish Infrastructure Assessment was produced in November 2013 and has already informed planning decisions within the broad location for new development, with appropriate Section 106 arrangements agreed.

#### **Shevington Parish Council:**

**Little seems to have been heard about the infrastructure needed to accommodate the increased development needs of Standish and how this might impact on Shevington. Are we going to be consulted on the work currently being undertaken on infrastructure needs? We are particularly interested in links between Shevington and West Lancashire.**

We have produced an Infrastructure Assessment for Standish (November 2013). This has already informed, and will continue to inform, planning decisions for residential development within the broad location for new development at Standish. This is a technical evidence document and therefore has not been subject to consultation. We will be working closely with Lancashire County Council with regard to the development of the West Lancashire Highways and Transport Master Plan (currently at the draft stage), notably in relation to any cross boundary improvements that could be delivered between Wigan and West Lancashire.

#### **Network Rail:**

**We wish to see a policy in the Plan that relates to the impact of development on level crossings. Transport Assessments should include studies into level crossings in the area and the impact of existing and future levels of usage as a result of development.**

The only level crossing within the borough is located within the Green Belt at Astley Moss, where no sites will be allocated for development. As such, we consider a policy relating to the impact of development on level crossings to be unnecessary.

## **APPENDIX 8: Other infrastructure issues**

**The need to help deliver other infrastructure improvements to support development including education, health, energy, water and green space.**

**There should be no more housing in Standish as infrastructure (roads, schools, health and others) is over capacity.**

We have prepared an Infrastructure Assessment for Standish (November 2013) to inform our decision-making on planning applications for housing development in the Standish broad location. The Assessment has considered the impact of 1,000 homes in Standish on a range of infrastructure types including transport, education, health, open space and recreation, community facilities and utilities. It has concluded that the impact of the development on the local transport network is the most fundamental consideration.

However, based on traffic modelling undertaken by Transport for Greater Manchester, it concludes that the local road network can accommodate an additional 1,000 new homes subject to the provision of significant new transport interventions delivered by the developments or by financial contributions from the developers as appropriate. Other non-transport infrastructure requirements can be met through financial contributions based upon the number of homes proposed (a cost per dwelling).

**There should be no more housing in Golborne and Lowton as infrastructure (roads, schools, health and others) is over capacity.**

The Infrastructure Assessment for Golborne and Lowton (November 2013) identifies the infrastructure required to support the delivery of 1,000 new homes in Golborne and Lowton. This includes significant transport infrastructure including junction improvements, a new link road and new and improved public transport and walking and cycling provision. These will be delivered by the developments or by financial contributions from the developers as appropriate.

**There should be no more housing in Bryn as infrastructure (roads, schools, health and others) is over capacity.**

As stated in Core Strategy Policy SP4, the broad location at Landgate will be allocated in the Allocations and Development Management Local Plan for a mix of housing and employment development and will contribute towards the total of at least 15,000 homes needed in the borough.

The principle of a mixed development including approximately 300 homes at Landgate has been established in the Core Strategy. There is sufficient school and health capacity in the locality to accommodate this level of growth.

**There should be no more housing built south of Atherton as infrastructure (roads, schools, health and others) is over capacity.**

Our Initial Transport Assessment (July 2012) concludes that whilst sustainable transport improvements and a new link road through the site would reduce traffic impact, large scale housing development south of Atherton would increase peak time car borne trips to/from the B5215, B5235, A579 and A577 junctions, resulting in a slight increase in congestion in the Atherton and Tyldesley areas. More detailed transport assessments and an investigation into the capacity of other local infrastructure such as school and health provision will need to be undertaken to assess the suitability of sites for allocation.

**No more houses should be built until the strategic road network is improved and additional local infrastructure such as schools and health facilities are provided.**

Policy SP2 of the adopted Core Strategy sets out the strategic approach to improving the road network. This is complemented by our Transport Strategy which sets out the strategic priorities for all travel issues.

In addition, the Infrastructure Delivery Plan identifies transport and other infrastructure required to meet the spatial objectives and growth anticipated in the Core Strategy and shows how the required infrastructure can be delivered.

Further Infrastructure Assessments will be prepared for broad locations for new development and other large development sites, where necessary, to consider the impact of the development on a range of infrastructure types including transport, education, health, open space and recreation, community facilities and utilities.

#### **Need to take account of proposed HS2 route in Lowton**

The proposed HS2 route will be taken into account in allocating land for development in Lowton.

#### **Need to provide infrastructure to meet demands of new development (in general and specifically in Lowton / Golborne, Standish, Bryn, Atherton)**

We have prepared infrastructure assessments for Standish and Golborne and Lowton (November 2013) to inform our decision-making on planning applications for housing development within the broad locations for new development. These have considered the impact of 1,000 homes in these areas on a range of infrastructure types including transport, education, health, open space and recreation, community facilities and utilities and identify the new infrastructure required to support their delivery. These will be delivered by the developments or by financial contributions from the developers as appropriate.

In addition, the Infrastructure Delivery Plan identifies transport and other infrastructure required to meet the spatial objectives and growth anticipated in the Core Strategy and shows how the required infrastructure can be delivered.

Further Infrastructure Assessments will be prepared for broad locations for new development and other large development sites, where necessary, to consider the impact of the development on a range of infrastructure types.

#### **Improvement of strategic road network**

Policy SP2 of the adopted Core Strategy sets out the strategic approach to improving the road network. This is complemented by our Transport Strategy which sets out the strategic priorities for all travel issues.

In addition, the Infrastructure Delivery Plan identifies transport and other infrastructure required to meet the spatial objectives and growth anticipated in the Core Strategy and shows how the required infrastructure can be delivered.

Further Infrastructure Assessments will be prepared for broad locations for new development and other large development sites, where necessary, to consider the impact of the development on a range of infrastructure types including transport, education, health, open space and recreation, community facilities and utilities.

**Improved prospects and amenities for young people – sports, recreation, education and employment.**

The Allocations Plan will set appropriate standards for open space sport and recreation provision. We are currently in the process of updating our open space, sport and recreation assessment from which a robust, up-to-date assessment of needs will be derived.

The council's adopted Core Strategy sets out the policy approach to improving education and learning.

The Core Strategy sets out the policy approach to providing employment opportunities for local people and we recognise that youth unemployment is a very important issue. Whilst the plan process can help to create employment opportunities, this issue needs to be addressed by a range of policy initiatives beyond the statutory plan process.



## **Appendix 9: Open space, sport and leisure issues**

### **The need to make it easier to walk and cycle and enable opportunities for leisure and sport, to help people live healthier lifestyles**

#### **The need to protect open spaces**

**Green spaces are disappearing to make way for housing and wildlife is suffering, especially in Atherton. Creating new areas for wildlife to move to by developers is only a token gesture.**

It is accepted that there will be an impact on green spaces and wildlife when housing development takes place. Any site being allocated for development would have to be subject to detailed ecological surveys. The results would have to inform the detailed design of development, including appropriate mitigation measures, and the decision-making process on any planning applications. Inappropriate mitigation measures would not be acceptable.

**Protecting land for walking, cycling, exercising and children's play should be vital considering there is such a shortage of space for this. Loss of green spaces makes it harder for walkers, runners, cyclists, dog walkers and horse riders to enjoy a traffic free environment and to pursue a healthier lifestyle. More leisure facilities are needed.**

Developments will retain and/or provide areas of open space, sport and recreation on-site, including areas for children's play and leisure facilities. Alternatively they will contribute to off-site provision as appropriate in line with the requirements of national and local planning policy. Public rights of way will be identified on sites allocated for development and retained or diverted through statutory procedures if warranted. Opportunities to include new off-road walking and cycling links from housing to key local destinations will be taken where possible. We are currently updating our open space, sport and recreation assessment. This will identify existing recreation land and areas where leisure facilities are insufficient. Opportunities for people to undertake exercise for personal fitness will increase as improvements to the quantity, quality and accessibility of open space is secured as a result of allocating land for housing development.

**It is a basic human right to have access to the countryside, especially in Atherton and Tyldesley. The need to conserve areas of natural beauty cannot be overstated.**

Policy CP2 of the Core Strategy commits the council to protecting and enhancing valuable open spaces, sporting and recreational facilities, whilst Policy CP9 specifies that we will improve the natural environments and open spaces within and between our towns and settlements. The Core Strategy sets the framework within which the Allocations and Development Management Plan will be prepared.

**Do not repeat past mistakes in not providing sufficient open space infrastructure in an area. Policies should be based on robust up to date assessments of needs.**

The Allocations and Development Management Plan will set appropriate standards for open space, sport and recreation provision. We are currently in the process of updating our open space, sport and recreation assessment from which a robust, up-to-date assessment of needs will be derived.

### **Activity levels and health / wellbeing**

**People walking and cycling to reduce traffic is not a realistic aspiration. Wigan is acknowledged as an area of obesity yet not enough is done to help with this problem. People have a right to be able to walk and cycle safely within their local area, to help them lead healthier lifestyles.**

The vast majority of sites identified as having housing potential in our Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment are sustainably located close to existing local facilities and walking and cycling networks. Safe walking and cycling routes will be maintained, improved or provided as part of future housing developments, and therefore the ability to walk and cycle safely becomes a more realistic proposition.

**We need green areas in Atherton for the health and wellbeing of the residents who suffer some of the greatest deprivation in England.**

A strategic objective of the Core Strategy is to improve health and life-expectancy, particularly in our most deprived neighbourhoods. The Council works closely with housebuilders to ensure that, where appropriate, new housing developments provide new or retain existing areas of green space, in accordance with planning policy, including walking and cycling links.

**The Plan should commit to providing new and safeguarding existing open spaces for walking, cycling and horse-riding, and sporting and cultural facilities.**

Policy CP2 of the Core Strategy commits to protecting and enhancing valuable open spaces, sporting and recreational facilities in the borough. It also commits to providing additional facilities where evidence shows these to be lacking. We are currently updating our Open Space, Sports and Recreation Assessment which will provide the up-to-date evidence needed to support the setting of appropriate local standards for the provision of open space and outdoor sports facilities. These will then be incorporated in the Allocations Plan.

Commitments to providing indoor sports and cultural facilities are given in Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy. This will be supported by a Community Buildings Strategy, currently in the course of preparation, that will help to ensure appropriate buildings are available in appropriate locations to serve the needs of the communities in which they are located.

## **APPENDIX 10: Design and landscape issues**

**We need to improve the design and landscaping of new buildings and places, conserve the best of the past and improve the natural environment – including Greenheart – to help make the borough a more pleasant place to live and work.**

**Buildings and their surroundings should be practical and accessible rather than landscaped. Sometimes the landscaping reduces car parking and makes the buildings more difficult to access.**

Buildings and their surroundings should be practical, accessible and landscaped and there is no reason why – through good urban and landscape design – that we cannot achieve this when development takes place. The use of landscaping in and around car parks provides multiple benefits and will be an essential part of any future development. Landscaping should be integrated into car parks. When well designed it will not reduce parking spaces and actually helps make accessing buildings easier to understand.

**I agree that it is essential that green spaces are preserved.**

Support welcomed.

**It is essential that the open space and wildlife is protected when developing sites for housing.**

Where appropriate, developments will retain and/or provide new areas of open space, including areas for children's play and leisure facilities. Alternatively developments can contribute to off-site open space provision in line with the requirements of national and local planning policy.

It is accepted that there will be an impact on green spaces and wildlife when housing development takes place. Any site being allocated for development would have to be subject to detailed ecological surveys. The results would have to inform the detailed design of development, including appropriate mitigation measures, and the decision-making process on any planning applications. Inappropriate mitigation measures would not be acceptable.

## **APPENDIX 11: Green Belt issues**

### **The need to protect the Green Belt**

**The need to allocate land for houses and businesses contradicts the need to protect the Green Belt.**

The work we have done so far and on the Core Strategy suggests that we can identify enough land to meet the borough's need for land for housing and business uses for at least the next 15 years without having to use any Green Belt land. However, it is clearly important to provide land for the businesses which support the local economy and provide employment for local people.

### **Green Belt needs to be protected from ill-judged allocations of safeguarded land**

None of the land designated as safeguarded land for future development was ever previously in the Green Belt.

### **Development should be in Green Belt areas such as Billinge, Winstanley and Appley Bridge**

The principle of focusing development primarily towards the east-west core of the borough has been established in the Core Strategy and gained widespread support. Development will be directed towards the east-west core in order to achieve transformational regeneration in the areas where most of our economic and social deprivation is concentrated and where our environment is most degraded. Development in these areas will also help to diversify the borough's housing offer and significantly contribute towards the delivery of much needed new and improved transport infrastructure which will enhance east-west connectivity across the borough. Directing development equally towards peripheral Green Belt areas such as these would not achieve these social, economic and environmental objectives and would harm the Green Belt, a key national and local policy.

### **How do you intend to protect our Green Belt areas while at the same time building in Wigan, Ince, Hindley, Platt Bridge, Leigh, Atherton, Tyldesley and Astley and also Golborne, Lowton and Standish, and promoting HS2 which again will harm our Green Belt areas?**

The areas referred to, where most development will be focused, are not in the Green Belt. HS2 is a proposal of central government not the council. National Green Belt policy has the fundamental aim of preventing urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open and does not therefore include a presumption against local or national transport infrastructure projects such as this which would, otherwise, be impossible to construct.

### **This plan should contain absolute protection for the Green Belt which is just as important for the borough as identifying land for business.**

The starting point for the plan is the commitment, in the Core Strategy, that there will be no alterations to the boundaries of the Green Belt. At the same time, it is clearly important to provide land for the businesses which support the local economy and provide employment for local people.

### **There is a trade-off between allowing a developer to build on Green Belt so as to maximise profits and the development of brownfield sites which erode their profit margins.**

The Allocations and Development Management Local Plan is to be prepared within the framework set by the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy specifies that all our development needs for the next 15 years can be met without having to develop Green

Belt land. Similarly, the plan will be prepared within the context set by national planning policy which encourages the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value.

**Building nearer the centre of Wigan seems the more relevant option rather than expanding into peripheral and Green Belt land.**

This is precisely what we intend to do so far as this is consistent with the ability to identify sufficient land for future development needs, as is made clear in the Core Strategy, which specifies that we will focus development primarily on Wigan, Ince, Hindley, Platt Bridge, Leigh, Atherton, Tyldesley and Astley and also Golborne, Lowton and Standish.

**Green Belt, like the rest of the open countryside needs to be allowed to evolve and adapt to meet changing needs, particularly for agriculture and recreation activities. We therefore believe that the penultimate key issue not only needs to refer to protecting the Green Belt, but also the need to accommodate and promote changing needs, for the benefit of the Green Belt, local residents and the local economy.**

Acknowledge the logic of this but the Allocations Plan is required to work within current national planning policy, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

**Building south of Atherton would destroy what little Green Belt there is there.**

The site known as South of Atherton comprises land safeguarded for future development. Development there would not destroy any Green Belt land.

**How are we protecting the Green Belt by building on fields in Standish?**

None of the areas identified as having potential for housebuilding in Standish are in the Green Belt. They comprise land safeguarded for future development which protects the Green Belt by providing a reserve of land for future development without the need to use Green Belt land.

**Some brownfield sites contain more fauna and flora than cultivated Green Belt land. It is equally important to protect them**

It is accepted that this may be the case in some locations. However, Green Belt land is not protected because of its ecological importance but to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. Where sites are identified as containing features or species of ecological value, they are protected from development by specific designations which recognise their wildlife value.

**Any Green Belt in Atherton should be protected**

The starting point for the plan is the commitment, in the Core Strategy, that there will be no alterations to the boundaries of the Green Belt. It is therefore the case that no Green Belt around Atherton will be allocated for development.

**The Green Belt is not being protected.**

The starting point for the plan is the commitment, in the Core Strategy, that there will be no alterations to the boundaries of the Green Belt and that we can identify enough land to meet the borough's need for land for housing and business uses for at least the next 15 years without having to use any Green Belt land.

**Safeguarded land is the last buffer between the urban and rural landscapes, and exists to protect the Green Belt against the encroachment of urbanisation. Safeguarded land therefore ought to be protected against development for that very reason.**

Safeguarded land protects the Green Belt by providing a reserve of land for future development without the need to use Green Belt land. Its function is not to provide a buffer between urban and rural landscapes.

**The Green Belt land to the rear of Abbey Road in Lowton is a wild meadow with an abundance of wildlife; it should therefore be protected.**

The land to the rear of Abbey Road, Lowton is not Green Belt but land safeguarded for future development, as are all the other areas identified in the Core Strategy as having potential for housing development. Although wildlife exists to some degree in all undeveloped areas, this site has not been identified as having significant habitats or species present such as to preclude its development.

## **APPENDIX 12: Climate change issues**

**The need to help people adapt to climate change, use less energy and make less waste in order to live more sustainable lives.**

**Climate change is unproven, is a natural process or cannot be tackled in this country due to the state of the economy.**

Wigan Council, along with its Greater Manchester partners, supports the UK's aim of reducing carbon emissions and adapting to climate change. This is set out in the council's Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan and the Greater Manchester Climate Change Strategy, which are supported by robust evidence. The council supports the view of UK Government, the Committee on Climate Change, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and other international institutions and, amongst other scientific institutions, the Royal Society that climate change is a real issue and requires a response.

**There should be more emphasis on sustainability and sustainable travel.**

The Allocations and Development Management Local Plan will be prepared within the framework set by the Core Strategy. This contains a strong emphasis on sustainability and sustainable travel including a key policy relating to the presumption in favour of sustainable development and a specific policy dealing with accessibility. The Allocations and Development Management Local Plan will, in the light of this, seek to ensure development is as sustainable as possible and plays its part in reducing emissions and preparing for climate change impacts, including energy and resource efficiency, sustainable travel support and adaptation measures. Any specific suggestions for giving a greater emphasis to sustainability and sustainable travel can be considered at the next stage of plan preparation when specific policies and proposals are put forward.

**Support the climate change issue as set out, subject to viability testing of any proposals arising from it.**

Support welcomed. Measures put forward will be mindful of the other responsibilities placed on development, as well as national and international agreements and legislation. They will also take into account wider sustainability objectives and be site specific where relevant. In line with national planning policy, policies and proposals put forward will be subject to feasibility and viability.

## **APPENDIX 13: Other issues**

### **The council needs to listen to the public before making decisions**

The council is committed to consulting the public at every stage of preparing Local Plans. The consultation processes are set out in the Statement of Community Involvement.

### **Need regular monitoring of the Core Strategy**

The adopted Core Strategy chapter 10 sets out how we will monitor performance. Details are published in the Annual Monitoring Report which is available on the council's website.

**Although at this early stage there are no site specific allocations, any proposed development / allocations should be directed away from areas at risk of flooding (Flood Zones 2 & 3) and the sequential test utilised in line with the Wigan Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. Future development / allocations should also have due regard for the Water Framework Directive. When allocating development nothing should be done that adversely impacts the status of a waterbody.**

Agree. The Allocations and Development Management Local Plan will have due regard to Flood Zones and utilise the sequential test in line with the Wigan Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. We will also have due regard to the Water Framework Directive and will ensure that development does not adversely impact the status of a waterbody and where possible will seek to improve the status of waterbodies.

**Some of the land mentioned in your proposal should be used for agriculture. The grades of soil can be easily improved by experts. With looming food shortages and huge increase of the population, it wouldn't be very wise to cover farm lands with concrete.**

National policy ensures that we protect the best and most versatile agricultural land from irreversible loss to development. Whilst it is accepted that we need agricultural land to feed the population, we also need to use land to meet their housing and economic development needs. Planning aims to balance such competing requirements for the use of land.

**The council should include a policy to protect existing community, cultural and social facilities by resisting their loss or change of use unless replacement facilities are provided on site or within the vicinity which meets the needs of the local population; or necessary services can be delivered from other facilities without leading to, or increasing, any shortfall in provision, and it has been demonstrated that there is no demand for another similar use on site.**

Policy SP3 of the Core Strategy sets out the strategic approach to providing opportunities to participate in community activities. It commits the council to only allowing development that would result in the loss of a community facility when either: it can be demonstrated that there is no longer a need for the facility; or an alternative facility of equivalent or better standard will be provided, either on-site or elsewhere.

**The large population of trees on land at Coronation Road in Standish Lower Ground should be eliminated. The land was once an agricultural field and could be used as a play area. Previously, a pebbled pathway was laid around the field but this has been lost due to excessive tree growth. The trees are not maintained.**

The Town and Country Planning Act places a duty on all local authorities to protect trees irrespective of species or if they have grown naturally. However, we will



consider the removal of certain trees following a full amenity evaluation if it is found appropriate to do so. We cannot promote the removal of trees to return land to its original purpose if that land is currently providing environmental benefits.

#### **Coal Authority:**

**In line with policy CP17, it would be prudent to include a criterion which assessed coal mining data. In accordance with NPPF guidance (paragraphs 109, 120, 121 and 166), this would be a due diligence check to ensure that potential development sites do not contain any mine entries or other coal related hazards which would require remediation or stabilisation prior to development. The council should be able to carry out this assessment using the GIS Data we provided in September 2010.**

The process of preparing the Allocations and Development Management Plan will include a full assessment of any sites likely to be allocated for development. Such an assessment will include consideration of any mine entries or other coal related hazards included in the dataset referred to. However, it is the council's view that such hazards are not an absolute constraint to development –see next point.

**Former mining activities and related hazards are certainly not a strict constraint on development; indeed it would be far preferable for appropriate development to take place in order to remove these public liabilities on the general tax payer. Potential sites should not be excluded from allocation purely on the grounds of former mining legacy issues.**

Agreed.

**An assessment should be made of the likely impact on mineral resources, including coal. This will help to ensure that any potential sterilisation effects (along with whether prior extraction of the resource would be appropriate) are properly considered in line with the guidance in paragraphs 143 and 144 of the NPPF. The council should use the GIS data illustrating the spatial extent of surface coal resources previously supplied in September 2008, and recently reissued via our new Data Portal, to undertake this assessment.**

The issue of potential sterilisation of mineral resources and the potential for their prior extraction has already been addressed for Wigan Borough through the adopted Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Plan. It is therefore unnecessary to consider these matters in the Allocations and Development Management Local Plan.

#### **Leigh Ornithological Society**

**There is a need to protect locations and ecological contexts of non-statutory Sites of Biological Interest across the borough and secure the sensitive management of them.**

Sites of Biological Importance will be taken into account through the preparation of the Allocations and Development Management Local Plan. The effective management of these sites will be secured, where appropriate, as part of the development management process.

**There is a need to identify, map and protect wildlife corridors across the borough to maintain habitat and species connectivity, especially in the context of future development planning. There is also a need to maintain habitat connectivity at an appropriate scale, with appropriate vegetation and features in all significant developments.**

As set out in Policy CP12 of the Core Strategy, the boundaries of our wildlife corridors will be reviewed as part of the preparation of the Allocations and Development

Management Local Plan. The protection of wildlife corridors will help to maintain habitat connectivity in the borough.

**There is a need to better protect watercourses (especially in wildlife corridors) from over-close development, whether it is built or leisure-oriented (eg Westleigh Brook).**

Any allocation of land and future developments will need to have due regard the Water Framework Directive. We will ensure that development does not adversely impact the status of a waterbody and where possible will seek to improve the status of waterbodies.

**There is a need to require wildlife provision (using available industry standard modifications or equipment) wherever appropriate in residential and commercial buildings, especially for declining species (eg Swift, House Sparrow, Starling, House Martin and bats generally). There is also a need to enforce better design, execution and maintenance of mitigation measures generated in respect of adverse wildlife impacts**

Agreed. Where appropriate we consult Greater Manchester Ecological Unit on appropriate sites such as barn conversions and sites in or adjacent to SBIs and SSSIs. Where necessary, the council uses planning conditions to require developers to carry out a number of species mitigation measures before development commences. In addition, future Design Guide Supplementary Planning Documents could promote how developments can increase biodiversity.

**There is a need to enforce the use of native woody species and wild flowers in the creation of informal greenspace, with emphasis on management to maximise nectar production.**

Agreed. Through the development management process we already ensure that planting schemes are appropriate for the type and location of development and that suitable native tree and wildflower species are included.

**There is a need to ensure effective layouts for recreational routes in country parks and greenspace, which balance demands of users and control of disturbance to significant wildlife habitats.**

Policy CP9 of the Core Strategy commits to managing our green infrastructure as one extensive high quality and multi-functional network and safeguarding it from development that would compromise its integrity.

**There is a need to widen and develop the role of consultative groups like the Greenheart Forum to improve public awareness and interest in shaping their environment.**

The Greenheart Community Forum was established to involve a diverse range of volunteer and interest groups in planning, developing and using our countryside and green open spaces. The council welcomes improved public awareness and interest in the environment and will, within available resources, take opportunities to interact with such groups.

**Some acknowledgement of the need to subject to the same processes any government-led leveraged development of feeder businesses following on from any HS2 development would be useful, since it would be additional to anything mentioned in the key issues and could affect open country.**

The planning system ensures that all development proposals are treated in the same manner, in line with policies set out in statutory Local Plans. The allocations and development management policies to be set out in this plan, along with those in the

Core Strategy, will set out how the council will deal with proposals for all new development.

### **Natural England**

#### **There is a need to avoid harm to the character of locally valued landscapes.**

Locally valued landscapes have been identified in the Landscape Character Assessment. The findings of this assessment will be considered as part of the preparation of the Allocations and Development Management Plan.

#### **There is a need to avoid harm to the international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, and priority habitats, ecological networks and priority and/or legally protected species populations**

Agreed. Policy CP12 of the Core Strategy sets out the ways we will help wildlife prosper including the protection of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Sites of Biological Importance (SBI) and Local Nature Reserves (LNRs). We will carry forward and, where appropriate, review the designation and protection of these sites in the Allocations and Development Management Local Plan.

#### **There is a need to seek opportunities to contribute to the restoration and re-creation of habitats, the recovery of priority species populations and biodiversity enhancement.**

Agreed. The council will consider the role that the Allocations and Development Management Local Plan will play in the restoration and recreation of habitats, the recovery of priority species and biodiversity enhancement. Policy CP9 of the Core Strategy commits to managing our green infrastructure, including safeguarding and managing land sensitively to support a diverse range of wildlife.

#### **There is a need to seek opportunities to enhance and create Green Infrastructure.**

Agreed. A strategic objective of the Core Strategy is to increase the value of the green infrastructure, particularly in the Greenheart in the borough. Policy CP9 of the Core Strategy sets out how this will be achieved.

#### **There is a need to avoid harm to nationally and locally designated sites of importance for geological conservation - geological SSSIs and Local Geological Sites.**

Agreed. Policy CP12 of the Core Strategy commits to safeguarding important geological features in the borough.

#### **There is a need to seek opportunities to contribute to landscape restoration and enhancement.**

Agreed. Policy CP9 of the Core Strategy commits to strengthening the landscape character of the borough and the restoration of despoiled landscapes.

#### **There is a need to avoid 'Best and Most Versatile' Agricultural Land.**

Agreed. Policy CP17 of the Core Strategy commits to protecting our best and most versatile agricultural land from irreversible loss in accordance with national planning policy.

#### **There is a need to seek opportunities to enhance public rights of way and accessible natural green space.**

Agreed. Policy CP7 of the Core Strategy commits to developing and enhancing our on and off-road networks for walking and cycling to connect local residents to

employment and community facilities and for leisure purposes. Policy CP9 commits to managing our green infrastructure as one extensive high quality and multi-functional network and safeguarding it from development that would compromise its integrity.

### **Lancashire Wildlife Trust**

**The Great Manchester Wetlands Partnership has now been adopted as a locally designated Nature Improvement Area (NIA) by both the Greater Manchester and the Cheshire Local Nature Partnerships. Wigan Borough is wholly enclosed within its boundary. The existence of the NIA should be recognised in the Local Plan and, where possible, decisions made on planning should take into consideration the objectives of the NIA.**

The council will consider the planning implications of the borough's position within the Nature Improvement Area through the process of preparing the Allocations Plan.

**In line with the NPPF, the council should:**

- **set out a strategic approach in their Local Plans, planning positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure.**
- **plan for biodiversity at a landscape-scale across local authority boundaries', 'identify and map components of the local ecological network (including locally designated sites and therefore local wildlife sites), wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them and areas identified by local partnerships for habitat restoration or creation'.**
- **promote the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and protection and recovery of priority species populations'**
- **set out strategic priorities for the area... conservation and enhancement of the natural ...environment.'**
- **'identify land where development would be inappropriate for instance because of its environmental....significance.' and 'contain a clear strategy for enhancing the natural, built and historic environment and supporting Nature Improvement Areas where they have been identified.'**

Policies CP9 and CP12 of the Core Strategy commit the council to the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure and the identification and mapping of components of the local ecological network. Where appropriate, the boundaries of these sensitive areas, networks and habitats will be reviewed in the Allocations Plan, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework.

### **English Heritage**

**The Plan should include one or more specific development management policies for the historic environment in order to help inform decisions that affect it and others should where possible cross-reference heritage related issues.**

Policy CP11 of the Core Strategy commits to conserving and enhancing our heritage assets, encouraging the sympathetic and appropriate use of existing buildings, and promoting the value of our historic environment. It also commits to the preparation of a Historic Environment Supplementary Planning Document. We will consider the need for one or more specific development management policies within the Plan.

**Before allocating any site there would need to be some evaluation of the impact which the development might have upon those elements that contribute to the significance of a heritage asset, including their setting.**

The impact of development on heritage assets will be assessed as part of the process of allocating sites for development and also as part of the development management process, in line with policy CP11 of the Core Strategy.

**The council should consider the impact of strategic cross boundary heritage issues.**

Agreed. The council will consider if there are any such issues, and if so, will co-operate with adjoining authorities and other relevant bodies as appropriate.

**Strongly advise that conservation, archaeology and urban design colleagues at the local and county level are engaged to ensure you are aware of all the relevant features of the historic environment, and that the historic environment is effectively and efficiently considered as part of the allocation of any site, development management policies and in the preparation of the SEA.**

The council employs such experts either directly or indirectly through AGMA and will ensure that the historic environment aspects of the Allocations and Development Management Local Plan are properly considered.

## **APPENDIX 14: Comments from neighbouring and other Greater Manchester Local Authorities**

### **Bolton**

**The plan should take account of relevant evidence to address cross boundary issues. In particular there should be evidence about the transport implications of allocated sites, both individually and collectively. Other strategic issues such as the distribution of housing and employment land, and gypsy and traveller sites, should also take into account the implications for neighbouring areas. Bolton Council is, in principle, happy to cooperate with Wigan Council on these strategic issues in the Plan.**

The council will work collaboratively with other bodies including Bolton Council to ensure that strategic priorities across local boundaries are properly co-ordinated and clearly reflected in the Allocations and Development Management Local Plan.

### **Salford**

**The proposed Plan should take account of relevant evidence to address cross boundary and strategic issues. In particular, full consideration should be given to the transport implications of allocated sites (especially those along the A580 East Lancashire Road). Such allocations will clearly have the potential to encourage transport movements through Salford. In addition, the Plan should reflect the need to plan for biodiversity at a landscape scale (as required by National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 117), reflecting in particular the priority habitats on the Mosslands and the Great Manchester Wetlands Local Nature Improvement Area. Salford City Council look forward to continuing a dialogue with Wigan Council in respect of cross boundary planning matters, including your Plan.**

The council will work collaboratively with other bodies including Salford City Council to ensure that strategic priorities across local boundaries are properly co-ordinated and clearly reflected in the Allocations and Development Management Local Plan.

### **Oldham**

**Oldham Council has no comments to make at this stage. We look forward to continuing to work together in the future, in particular in relation to our Duty to Co-operate requirements**

The council intends to work collaboratively with other bodies including Oldham Council as appropriate to ensure that strategic priorities across local boundaries are properly co-ordinated and clearly reflected in the Allocations and Development Management Local Plan.