

# **Wigan Local Development Framework Core Strategy**

## **Sustainability appraisal of thematic options (Version 2)**

January, 2009

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## **1.0 Introduction**

Sustainability appraisal is a way of checking our plans and proposals to see what effect they might have on the environment, economy and our general quality of life.

To make sure we are concentrating on the most important issues, we collected lots of evidence. This information helped us to set up a sustainability checklist (which consists of 18 objectives).

By checking our plans and proposals against each objective in the checklist we are able to make them more sustainable. We can also compare the different options to see which perform best against the various sustainability objectives.

At the 'issues and options' stage of the Core Strategy preparation, we appraised and compared five options setting out where we could focus development in the borough. The results of this process can be found in an [interim appraisal report for the broad spatial options](#).

We also developed a number of different options for tackling 'thematic' issues such as sustainable design, housing density and the provision of renewable energy. These factors can affect development irrespective of the broad spatial location.

The results of the thematic options appraisal helped to inform a series of core policy principles that make up a key element of our Core Strategy Development Plan Document.

## **2.0 Methods**

The diagrams that follow (in the results section) show the positive and negative impacts of each of the thematic options against all 18 sustainability objectives. The more green blocks there are, the more positive the impacts are in relation to that sustainability objective. The more red blocks there are, the more negative the impacts are for that sustainability objective. There is a guide to the right of each diagram explaining just how positive or negative the impacts are.

This appraisal helped us to outline what effects each option would be likely to have on the sustainability objectives. It did not make the decision as to what approach we would follow, but helped us to pick the best parts of different options to achieve the best balance against the objectives; helping to shape the details of policy principles at the subsequent 'preferred options' stage.

### **2.1 Who did the sustainability appraisal?**

The sustainability appraisal process was coordinated and completed by the council's sustainability officer with support from members of the council's Sustainability Team and Planning Policy Team.

However, many more people were involved in carrying out the sustainability appraisal of the five spatial options. We asked for input from a range of council officers and partner organisations that have experience and knowledge in specific aspects of sustainability. For example, for the health objective, we involved members of the NHS Primary Care Trust in the appraisal of the five options; for the community safety objective we involved officers from the council's Community Safety Team.

We sought further involvement from these participants, as well as encouraging more people to get involved in the process as it progressed.

### **Further information**

This interim appraisal report should be read in conjunction with the [Core Strategy Issues and Options Report](#). For more information about sustainability appraisal please visit our website ([www.wigan.gov.uk](http://www.wigan.gov.uk))

This is where we have put any other sustainability appraisal documents, for example, our [broad scoping report](#), which contains our evidence and more detail about the methods we are using for the appraisal process.























































## 9.0 Limitations

Wherever possible, the sustainability appraisal impacts were identified on the basis of strong evidence and reference to the baseline position. However, there is still an amount of subjectivity that must be borne in mind when interpreting the results. The impact scores were also determined by a range of different people, and one person's definition of a 'major impact' may differ from another's. To ensure as much consistency as possible, a review of the impacts and scores was undertaken by the council's sustainability team after the individual appraisal sessions had taken place.

Although our appraisal is sufficiently thorough, we are aware that the process is somewhat subjective, and we may revise our assessment in light of new evidence and/or consultation responses.

## 10.0 What happened next?

This interim sustainability appraisal report was available to view and comment on alongside the 'Core Strategy: Issues and Options for community and stakeholder involvement' in February / March, 2008. Any comments received were taken into consideration and incorporated into a final sustainability appraisal report.

Along with consultation responses, the results from this interim report were also taken into consideration as the preferred spatial option for the borough was being developed.

Further sustainability appraisal work was undertaken as the Core Strategy progressed. This included:

- An assessment of a range of [broad spatial options](#).
- Detailed appraisal of the preferred option(s) and identification of mitigation / enhancement measures.
- Identification of monitoring indicators.
- Preparation of a full Sustainability Appraisal Report and non-technical summary that meets the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive.
- A Habitats Regulations Assessment of the preferred option(s).

## 11.0 Consultation and involvement

At this stage of the appraisal we had already consulted with a wide range of stakeholders about our approach to sustainability appraisal. Further details about whom we consulted with, the responses and suggestions we received, and the methods we are using can all be found in our [Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report](#).

### Further information

For further information about sustainability appraisal and to download other supporting documents (such as the scoping report) please visit our website at: [www.wigan.gov.uk](http://www.wigan.gov.uk)

From here click on 'Planning' and scroll down to 'Local Development Framework', then click on 'sustainability appraisal'.