

## Appendix G: The alternative spatial approach

The process we undertook to arrive at the spatial strategy policy for Wigan Borough (Policy SP1) was to consider five broad options. We then arrived at a preferred option which essentially was the 'Inner option plus parts of the east and west of the outer option'. This was referred to as 'east-west core of the borough'. In response to the shortfall of housing land, the spatial approach has been extended and is now the 'east-west core plus Standish, Golborne and Lowton. This is appraised at Chapter 10 of the main SA Report (10.3).

To test this, we have appraised it against alternative options – namely the 'east-west core plus northern parts of the outer option' and 'east-west core plus southern parts of the outer option'. The following diagrams illustrate the impact of this alternative against our 18 sustainability objectives, over the short, medium and long terms.

### **'East-West core plus northern parts of the outer option'**

#### Short term impacts

																		Major positive impact
																		Moderate - major positive
																		Moderate positive
																		Minor Positive
																		no fill = negligible impact / not relevant
																		? = uncertainty
																		Minor negative
																		Moderate negative
																		Moderate - major negative
																		Major negative impact
18. Economy and employment																		
17. Sustainable Economy																		
16. Accessibility																		
15. Energy																		
14. Community development																		
13. Education and learning																		
12. Housing																		
11. Recreation																		
10. Health																		
9. Waste																		
8. Neighbourhood quality																		
7. Community Safety																		
6. Built environment																		
5. Landscapes																		
4. Water																		
3. Soil and minerals																		
2. Air quality																		
1. Biodiversity																		

#### Medium term impacts

																		Major positive impact
																		Moderate - major positive
																		Moderate positive
																		Minor Positive
																		no fill = negligible impact / not relevant
																		? = uncertainty
																		Minor negative
																		Moderate negative
																		Moderate - major negative
																		Major negative impact
18. Economy and employment																		
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9. Waste																		
8. Neighbourhood quality																		
7. Community Safety																		
6. Built environment																		
5. Landscapes																		
4. Water																		
3. Soil and minerals																		
2. Air quality																		
1. Biodiversity																		

**Long term impacts**

																					Major positive impact
																					Moderate - major positive
																					Moderate positive
																					Minor Positive
1. Biodiversity	2. Air quality	3. Soil and minerals	4. Water	5. Landscapes	6. Built environment	7. Community Safety	8. Neighbourhood quality	9. Waste	10. Health	11. Recreation	12. Housing	13. Education and Learning	14. Community development	15. Energy	16. Accessibility	17. Sustainable Economy	18. Economy and employment				no fill = negligible impact / not relevant
																					? = uncertainty
																					Minor negative
																					Moderate negative
																					Moderate - major negative
																					Major negative impact

**Summary of impacts – ‘East-West core plus northern parts of the outer option’**

In the short term there are likely to be limited impacts. These will predominantly be negative – albeit minor in most cases. Notably, however, biodiversity, soil and minerals, housing and accessibility/transport will see short term negative impacts on a moderate level. This is largely due to the issues around the Standish area.

In the medium term we begin to see an increase in impacts – both positive and negative. This is perhaps because development is more likely to be seen during this timescale. Built environment; community safety; neighbourhood quality; health; recreation; housing; education; community development; sustainable economy and economy and employment all see moderate positive impacts from development. However, at the same time we see moderate negative impacts on biodiversity; soil and minerals; landscapes; recreation; housing; community development and accessibility/transport. The more ‘environmental’ issues are negative in the medium term.

In the long term this approach would see major positives in health; housing; economy/employment and possibly community development. However, community development would depend on the links with and to the Standish area. The other objectives would see moderate positive impacts except energy where the impact is likely to only be minor. At the same time, moderate negative impacts would be seen in biodiversity; landscapes and recreation. This is partly due to pressures on current recreational land but also due to weaker links into the Greenheart.

Much will depend on how development is brought forward and the supporting infrastructure for it. However, concerns remain over the environmental impacts and the benefits that could be achieved for more deprived areas.



## **Summary of impacts – the alternative spatial approach (‘East-West core plus southern parts of the outer option’)**

In the short term there is likely to primarily be minor impacts with only recreation – thanks to links into Greenheart – and education being notable. Housing may see a negative impact as supporting infrastructure is required. Naturally this improves over time.

In the medium term, positive benefits begin to be realised with impacts being moderately positive across the range of objectives – albeit with only minor positives in biodiversity, air quality (and the related accessibility and transport), waste and energy. Some negatives begin to be noticeable – particularly around air quality and accessibility/transport.

In the long term the spatial policy could have a major positive impact on social and economic objectives as it targets the areas that could benefit from the most positive aspects of development. However, this is tempered by the inclusion of some areas that will benefit only slightly. There is less of a positive impact on environmental objectives but it still remains positive.

Overall it could help close the gap between the borough’s most deprived areas and more affluent areas with notable impacts on landscapes, community safety, health, recreation, housing, community development and economy.

There will be notable long term negative impacts in landscapes and community safety although they will remain positive overall.

A lot will depend on the phasing of development to ensure those areas which most require investment receive it and supporting infrastructure is developed. Focusing development in more affluent areas may only serve to widen inequality gaps which could create further problems later on. However, overall our approach strongly supports our sustainability framework with notable positive impacts against most objectives in the long term.

There will a number of – predominantly minor – negative impacts across a range of objectives that will be unavoidable throughout the plan period and beyond. Without appropriate mitigation measures in place, the negative impacts could be greater in the long term, especially in terms of accessibility and transport.

This strategic spatial policy with mitigation and enhancement it would be a sustainable approach to satisfying the borough’s development needs.

## **Other alternatives**

Potential alternatives involving the release of Green Belt land for housing development around Wigan and at Leigh were considered amongst the options for addressing the shortfall of housing land in 2012. Individually those two spatial options are effectively incorporated within two of the broad spatial options considered at the Issues and Options: Option 1 'Focus on the east of the borough', which includes Leigh and Option 2 'Focus on the west of the borough', which includes Wigan. Together they are effectively incorporated within Option 4 'The inner are of the borough' and all 3 scenarios would be incorporated within the east-west core of the borough. Fundamentally however, they are in the Green Belt and the council does not believe that exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated for housing development in the Green Belt at this time. As such there are only these two alternatives to the strategic spatial policy selected.