

Westwood Park, Wigan Planning Framework

December 2020



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In light of the Referendum concerning the UK's membership of the EU, we are now in a period of uncertainty in relation to many factors that impact the property investment and letting markets. At this time organisations involved in the industry are reflecting on the potential implications of the UK having left the EU. Since the Referendum date it has not been possible to gauge the effect of the impact on rental and capital values, along with other elements affecting property appraisal.

The outbreak of the Novel Coronavirus (Covid 19), declared by the World Health Organisation as a "Global Pandemic" on the 11 March 2020, has impacted global financial markets. Market activity is being impacted in many sectors.

As at the date of this report, we consider that we can attach less weight to previous market evidence for comparison purposes, to inform viability, pricing and related recommendations and advice. Indeed, the current response to Covid 19 means that we are faced with an unprecedented set of circumstances on which to base a judgement. Given the unknown future impact that Covid-19 might have on the real estate market, we recommend that you keep under frequent review the advice contained in this report.

Cushman & Wakefield continues to closely monitor market developments and trends in order that we can provide clients with the most up to date advice. The views contained in this document are provided in the context of this market uncertainty and as such our estimates and opinions are susceptible to change. Accordingly we advise that clients have regard to this risk and may need to commission further advice before acting on the opinions expressed.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Following significant investment in local infrastructure in the area and to complement the Council's Economic Vision and Strategic Regeneration Framework for Wigan Town Centre, the time is right for the Council to bring the significant opportunity of Westwood Park to the market for a high quality and sustainable mixed use residential and employment scheme.

Purpose of the Planning Framework

- 1.2 The purpose of this Planning Framework is to:
- Support the development of Westwood Park, a key opportunity site close to Wigan Town Centre, for a mix of residential and employment use
 - Establish the planning policy context for the site
 - Provide guidance on the Council's expectations on the acceptable scale and design of potential schemes for the site and the mix of uses
 - Identify potential physical constraints that will shape the development of the site.
- 1.3 The Planning Framework is informal planning guidance, providing clarity for applicants and other stakeholders with regards to the site's future development. It will inform development proposals and planning decisions in the area.

Objectives for Westwood Park

- 1.4 The Council's key requirements for the development of the site following the recent investment of the A49 Link Road are:
- Create an aspirational neighbourhood accommodating a range of new homes, including a mix of types and tenures that will offer enhanced choice of housing in the area
 - Support new employment space to serve the needs of modern businesses
 - Deliver high quality green infrastructure, taking advantage of the site's desirable setting adjacent to Westwood Flash and the wider Wigan Flashes, the Leeds Liverpool Canal and proposed Greenheart visitor centre at Westwood Flash
 - Create an attractive gateway into the wider town centre along the enhanced strategic road network
 - Enhance the public rights of way network and improve pedestrian and cycling links to Wigan Town Centre and Wigan's infrastructure.

Westwood Flash



Leeds Liverpool Canal



Nice Pak



Progress House



New Road Infrastructure (A49) and Cycling/Pedestrian Routes



2.0 Site Context

Site Location

- 2.1 Westwood Park (see Figure 2.1) is located less than 1 km to the south of Wigan Town Centre which is benefiting from significant public and private investment. The Council adopted the Wigan Town Centre Strategic Regeneration Framework in January 2019 which includes key projects such as the creation of small business hubs as start-up space, re-development of the Market Hall and The Galleries (a key regeneration opportunity being brought forward by the Council through a joint venture partnership with Cityheart and BCEGI), and the development of residential space to create a more diverse cultural offer and regeneration opportunities linked to the rail stations through Wigan's designation as a HS2 hub. Wigan has been shortlisted for multi-million pound funding through the Future High Street Fund to revitalise the Town Centre.
- 2.2 The Council has embarked on a programme of estate regeneration at Worsley Mesnes, which is located to the west of the Westwood Park site. Following the preparation of a masterplan to support the regeneration of the Worsley Mesnes estate, the Council has recently appointed a developer to support the development of c.200 new homes as well as a new Local Centre and enhanced public realm and green linkages.

Site Description

- 2.3 Westwood Park covers an area of approximately 28 hectares and is one of the largest development sites within the borough. The site is predominantly brownfield and was home to the former Westwood Power Station which closed in 1986.

Figure 2.1 Westwood Park Red Line Boundary



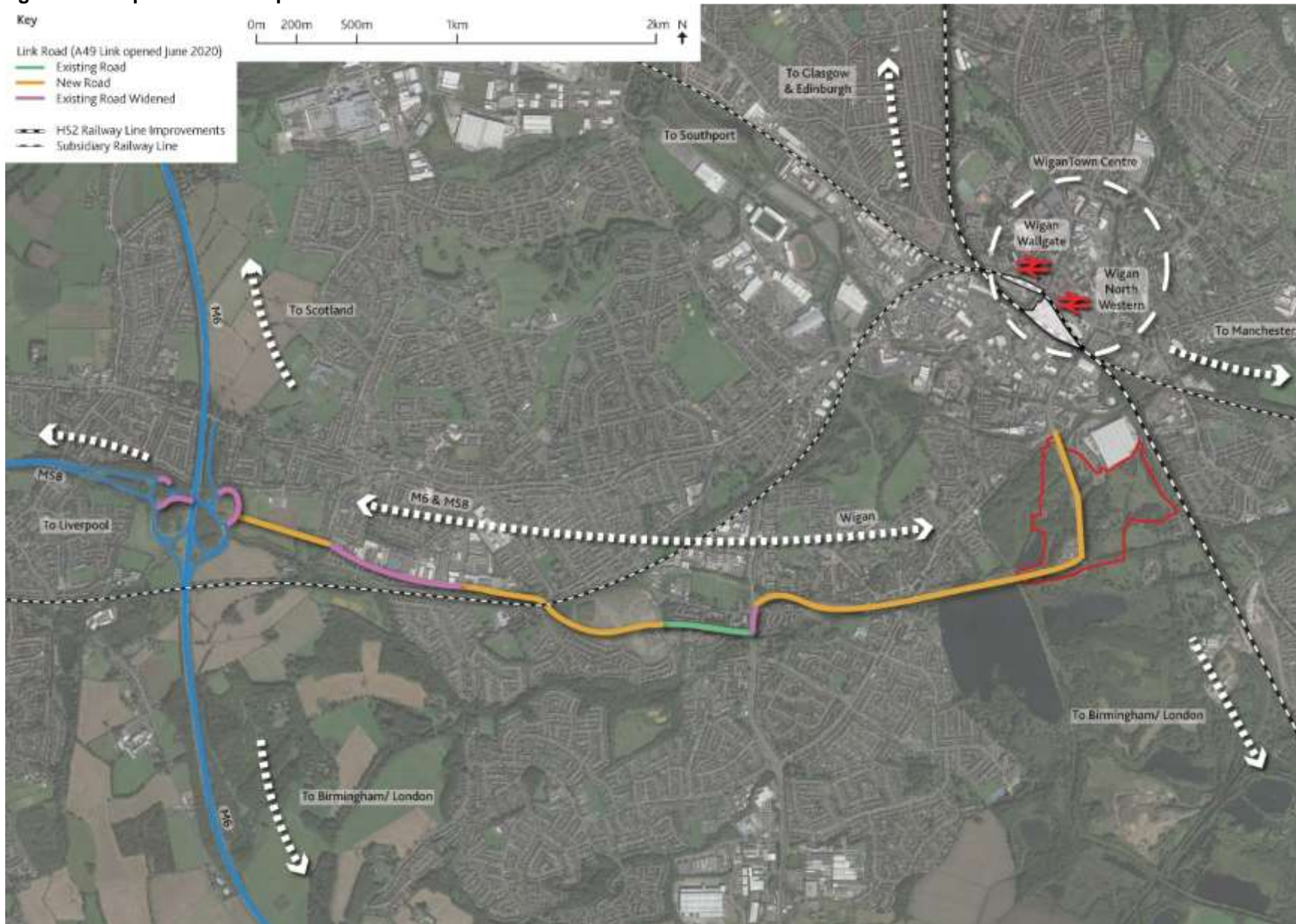
Source: Wigan Council

- 2.4 The site is bounded by the West Coast Mainline to the east, the alignment of the A49 Link Road and Westwood Cemetery to the south, the Westwood Flash Site of Biological Importance (SBI) to the west and existing employment uses, namely Nice-Pak, Unity House and Progress House, to the north.
- 2.5 The majority of the site is cleared, with the exception of four dwellings (of which two are Grade II Listed), a substation and surface car parking adjacent to the office buildings.
- 2.6 There are some existing public rights of way within the site boundary, of which the aim is to upgrade and improve these in line with the Rights of Way Improvement Plan.
- 2.7 The Council has proactively invested in new road infrastructure through the site - the A49 Link Road. The road opened to the public in June 2020 providing direct access to Wigan Town Centre to the north and significantly enhancing accessibility to Junction 25 of the M6 to the south. This gives it both excellent strategic route access and a position as a new gateway to Wigan Town Centre. It is within a short walk of the Town Centre amenities and public transport hubs, including a new bus station and local, regional and national train services provided at Wigan North Western and Wigan Wallgate Stations. This combination of excellent road and public transport accessibility and the fact that Wigan acts as a hub between Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Lancashire creates a new level of opportunity for connectivity, where local jobs and homes meet nationally important strategic corridors of M6 motorway and West Coast Mainline.
- 2.8 Current connectivity is powerful in itself, but will be strengthened by arrival of High Speed 2 rail in the future. More immediate strategic infrastructure delivery, due for completion in 2022, is the M58/M6 link road. Once complete Westwood Park will have direct access to the M58 and the M6 at Junction 26 via the A49 Link Road and Smithy Brook Road (see Figure 2.3). Longer term aspirations include a future extension of the A49 link road eastwards towards the M61 at Junction 5 and Bolton, via Hindley and Atherton. This route would connect directly into the site from the recently implemented roundabout to the south.
- 2.9 The majority of the site is owned by the Council. A small part is owned by Greenbank Properties. Both parties have agreed to work together to support the development of the site.
- 2.10 Further details on site constraints are provided in Section 5.

Figure 2.2 Context Plan



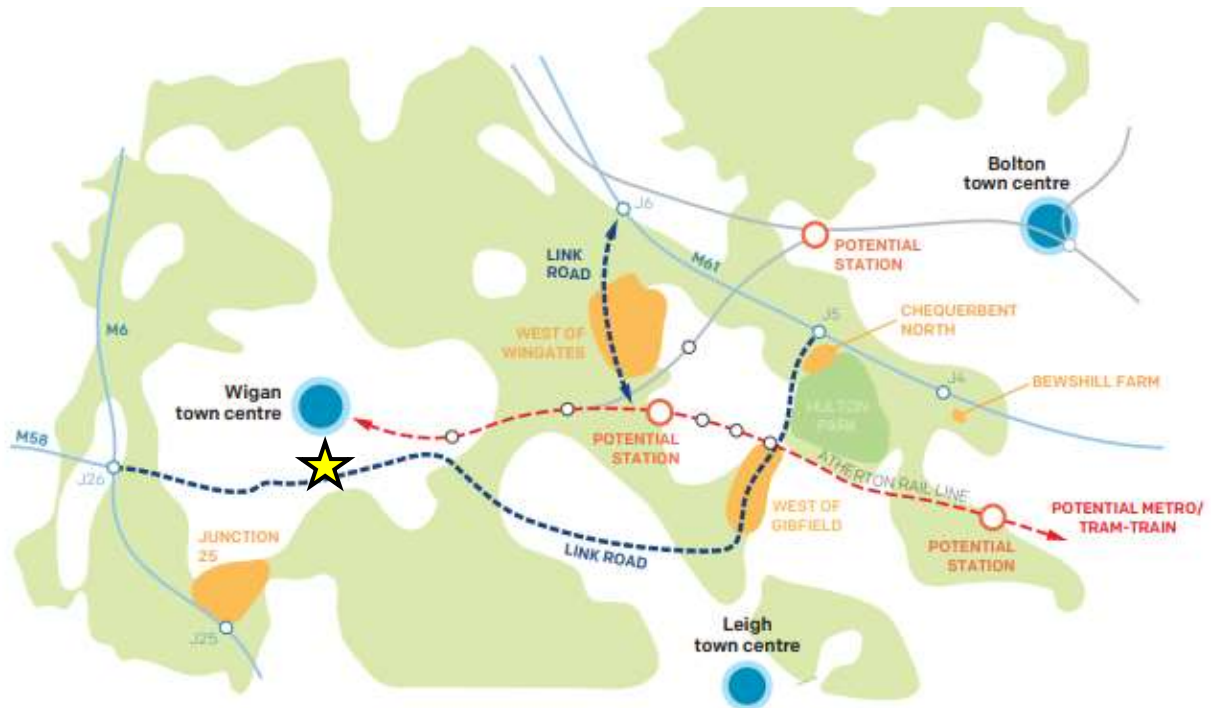
Figure 2.3 Proposed Road Improvements



3.0 Planning Policy and Context

- 3.1 The **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** provides the overarching framework for planning. It aims to boost the supply of new housing and promotes the use of brownfield land. The NPPF notes the need to consider local market conditions and the availability of infrastructure and services. It encourages the promotion of sustainable transport modes and regeneration and securing well designed, attractive healthy places. Conservation and enhancement of the historic environment is also encouraged. Relevant sections include:
- Achieving sustainable development;
 - Promoting healthy and safe communities;
 - Promoting sustainable transport;
 - Delivering a sufficient supply of homes;
 - Building a strong competitive economy;
 - Achieving well designed places;
 - Promoting an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses; and
 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.
- 3.2 The Publication version of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework was due to be consulted upon in December 2020. However, following the decision of Stockport Council to withdraw from the plan, the consultation was cancelled as the plan needed approval from all ten Councils in Greater Manchester to proceed.
- 3.3 As of January 2021, the preparation of a joint development plan of the remaining nine Greater Manchester districts has been agreed in principle by the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA). However, the implications and next steps, including a timeframe to adoption, are currently being considered by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and the nine districts.
- 3.4 Whilst there is currently uncertainty about the GMSF, a potential future joint development plan of the 9 remaining districts would undoubtedly retain, in the most part, the overall strategic objectives and spatial strategy set in the December 2020 Publication version. This supported developing on previously developed land, increasing housing densities to make best use of land, protecting the environment and enhancing green infrastructure, good design and supporting town centres.
- 3.5 Of particular relevance was draft Policy GM-Strat 8 Wigan-Bolton Growth Corridor which sought to deliver a regionally significant area of economic and residential development. The draft policy focused on improved transport links. Alongside rail and bus network improvements it proposed new highway infrastructure connecting Junction 26 of the M6 and Junction 5 of the M61 which would incorporate the new A49 link road which runs to the south of the Westwood Park site. This is illustrated in Figure 3.1.
- 3.6 This transport infrastructure would significantly improve highway connections in the north-west of Greater Manchester, and better integrate the strong logistics functions along the M6 and M61 into the wider city region, as well as help to address local congestion issues. The new infrastructure would also extend through and near a series of deprived neighbourhoods across central Wigan and greatly improve access to employment opportunities, and hence have a major regenerative role and reduce levels of deprivation. There are numerous development sites identified along this corridor, including Westwood Park, development of which will contribute towards boosting the competitiveness of the northern areas, support the economic prospects of Wigan and Bolton, and maximise the benefits of new transport infrastructure.

Figure 3.1 Draft GMSF Policy GM-Strat 8 Wigan Bolton Growth Corridor Plan



 Westwood Park

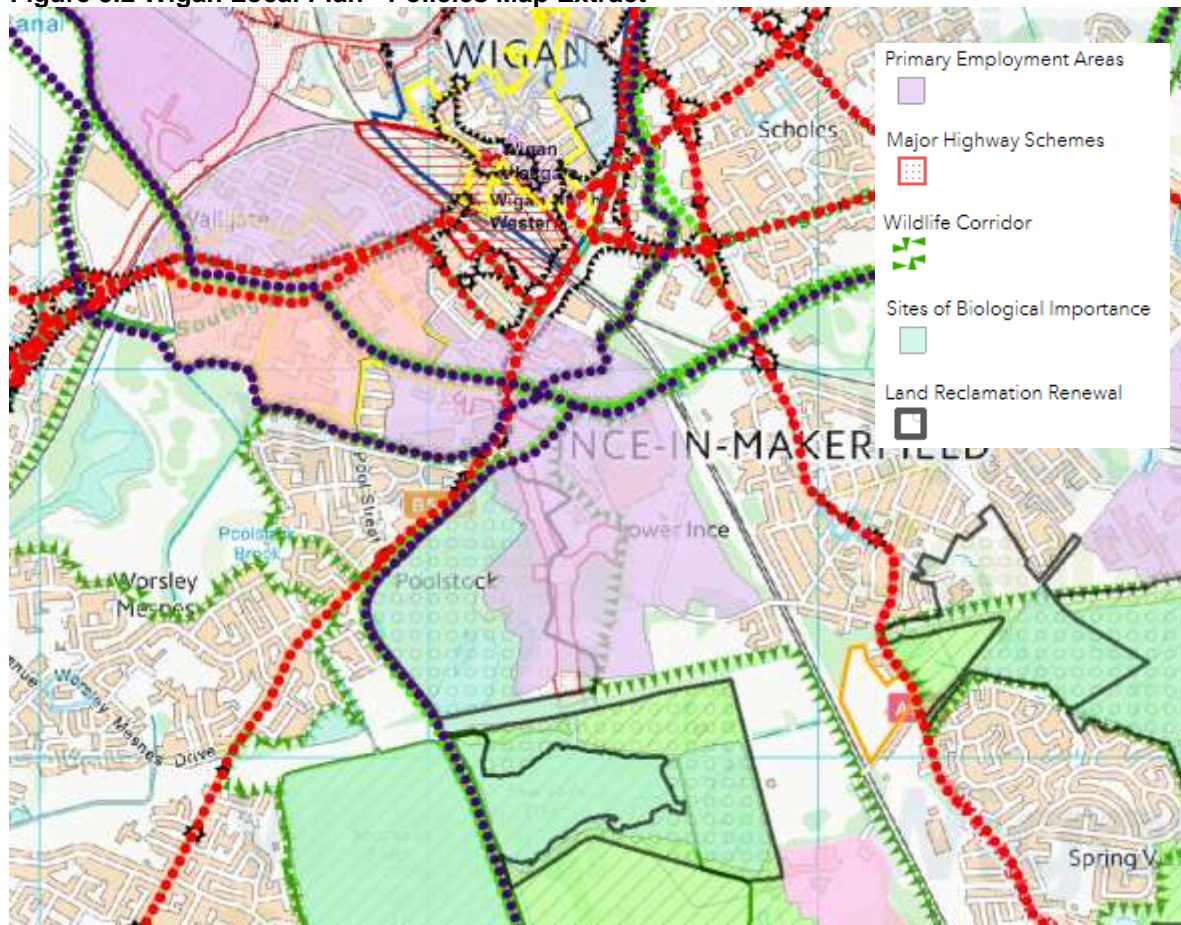
Source: GMSF

Development Plan

3.7 The **Wigan Local Plan** is formed by the Core Strategy (2013) and saved Unitary Development Policy (2006). The Core Strategy sets strategic objectives for the borough and has relevant policies on a variety of topics including:

- SD1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- SP1 - Spatial Strategy for Wigan
- SP5 - Greenheart
- CP1 - Health and well-being
- CP3 - Community facilities
- CP5 - Economy and employment
- CP6 - Housing
- CP7 - Accessibility
- CP9 - Strategic landscape and green infrastructure
- CP10 - Design
- CP11 - Historic environment
- CP12 - Wildlife habitats and species
- CP13 - Low carbon development
- CP14 - Waste
- CP16 - Flooding
- CP17 - Environmental Protection
- CP18 - Developer Contributions

Figure 3.2 Wigan Local Plan - Policies Map Extract



Source: Wigan Council

- 3.8 The majority of the site is designated as a Primary Employment Area (saved Policy EM1A of the Wigan Unitary Development Plan, 2006). However the Council is supportive in principle for the development of the site as housing led development/mixed use site (see Planning History below). It is bounded to the west and south by sites of biological importance, to the east by existing employment (including the manufacturer Nice-Pak) whilst the wider setting is predominantly residential.
- 3.9 Wigan Local Plan is also supported by a series of adopted Supplementary Planning Documents which are available at www.wigan.gov.uk. The most relevant of these are:
- Residential Design Guide
 - Open Space in New Housing
 - Affordable Housing in New Residential Developments and associated Development viability guidance note
 - Re-use of Employment Land and Buildings for Non-employment uses
 - Travel Plans
 - Landscape Design
 - Canalside Development and Improvement
 - Development and Air Quality
 - Wigan Town Centre Strategic Regeneration Framework.

3.10 Updated versions of the Landscape Design SPD and the Development and Air Quality SPD, and a new Planning for Health SPD, are currently being prepared by the Council and are scheduled to be published in 2021 and will be available at www.wigan.gov.uk.

Listed Buildings and Buildings within the Red Edge

3.11 The site comprises the following Listed Buildings:

Name	Listed Status	Reason for designation
Westwood Hall and attached Cottage, Westwood Lane	Grade II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It is an unusually well preserved example of a C17 hall dwelling adapted and extended to meet C18 tastes ▪ It retains a number of early features, including a cruck truss, wooden plank partition wall, staircase with barley sugar balusters, paneled wall cupboards and plank doors ▪ It retains a little altered late C18/ early C19 wing adapted from part of the earlier building, with staircase, paneled doors, heightened ceilings and tall, 6 over 6 sash windows ▪ The growth and development of the hall can be read in the surviving elements.
Gardeners Cottage	Grade II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ C18. Dressed stone with stone slate roof ▪ 2 storeys, 2 bays ▪ Molded base, dropped to entrance, and 1st floor sill band; quoins ▪ Windows have casements ▪ Entrance has architrave and paneled door ▪ Gable-end stacks. Interior has beams and wide boarded doors with strap hinges.

Figure 3.3 Listed Buildings and Buildings within the Red Line Boundary



- 3.12 Westwood Hall and Cottage is owned by Wigan Council whilst Gardeners Cottage is privately owned. Within the red line boundary there are a further two properties on Westwood Lane which are not listed - Westwood Lodge and Arrow Wood.

Planning History

- 3.13 The most recent planning application in respect of Westwood Park was a hybrid approval (A/12/77633/MAJOR) which granted outline planning permission (with all matters reserved except for access) for a mixed-use development scheme comprising residential uses (C3 - up to 430 units), employment (B1, B2, B8), a neighbourhood centre (A1-A5) and a visitor centre (D1) and full permission for new road infrastructure (A49). Whilst the full permission for the road has been implemented, the outline planning permission lapsed in September 2018.

4.0 Housing Strategy and Context

- 4.1 This section provides an overview to support consideration of the potential mix of homes that the Council will expect to see on Westwood Park in line with the Wigan's emerging Housing Strategy and the Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) which was adopted in November 2020.
- 4.2 The Housing Strategy acknowledges the need to focus on the dynamics between people at different stages of their lives, the sort of homes they can afford and what they would ideally want, the suitability of homes that are available and the need to ensure homes are built in the right places.
- 4.3 There is potential and an expectation that Westwood Park will:
- Support the Council's aspirations for enhancing its town centres by offering a better choice of homes in their vicinity. The delivery of new homes within the Westwood Park development will support the vitality of Wigan town centre
 - Support the Council's Housing Strategy and action to provide a broader range of housing options and a quality 'place offer' which will help attract a mixed and diverse community to live in Wigan Borough who can fill skills gaps in the borough's economy, including high earners
 - Harness its environmental assets to create a new aspirational quality neighbourhood, incorporating larger homes, attracting people with higher incomes to Westwood Park - enhancing housing choice in this part of the borough and attracting new residents into the area
 - Provide homes to meet local needs and support connected local communities
 - Provide a range of affordable homes.
- 4.4 Policy CP6 of the Local Plan Core Strategy seeks the provision of 25% on-site provision of affordable housing on all sites consisting of 10 dwellings or more subject to viability. The 2020 HNA recommends that the 25% target is maintained but there is a shift in emphasis towards rented tenures, with a tenure split of 40% low cost home ownership products and 60% affordable/social rented. The split encourages developments to deliver a better mix and balance of types of homes to provide a broader range of housing options and a quality place offer which will help attract more people to live in Wigan Borough, in accordance with the Housing Strategy.
- 4.5 The large scale of Westwood Park offers the capacity to attract a diverse range of residents and should support a broad mix of dwellings. It is anticipated that the focus will be on 2 and 3 bedroom properties for both market and affordable homes as this is highlighted in the 2020 HNA. Due to the environmental assets of the area, a portion of larger sized homes (4 and 5 bedroom) plus could be provided alongside 2 and 3 bedroom homes. The Housing Strategy also identifies a key priority to have the right type of accommodation that enables older people and people with disabilities to live well. This could include, for Westwood Park, the provision of a proportion of bungalows or level-access accommodation for both market and affordable housing offers.
- 4.6 The Housing Strategy highlights the Council's desire to work with Small Medium Enterprises (SME) house builders alongside volume house builders to diversify housing delivery and support community wealth building in the borough. The Council would also welcome initiatives such as the potential for contributing to the low carbon agenda.

5.0 The Spatial Framework

5.1 In addition to taking into account the planning and housing policy and guidance set out in the previous sections, consideration will need to be given to the physical environment when determining proposals for the site, including:

- Topography
- Flood risk including drainage channels constructed as part of the new link
- Railway line including bridge crossing from Ince and pedestrian underpass to the northeast
- Leeds Liverpool Canal
- Neighbouring uses including Nice-Pak, Unity House and Progress House
- Substation
- Powerlines, including wayleaves needed
- Road infrastructure - internal and external
- Public Rights of Way
- Green space
- Trees.

5.2 Taking the above factors into account, Figure 5.1 identifies the potential development plots for Westwood Park which could accommodate the following uses:

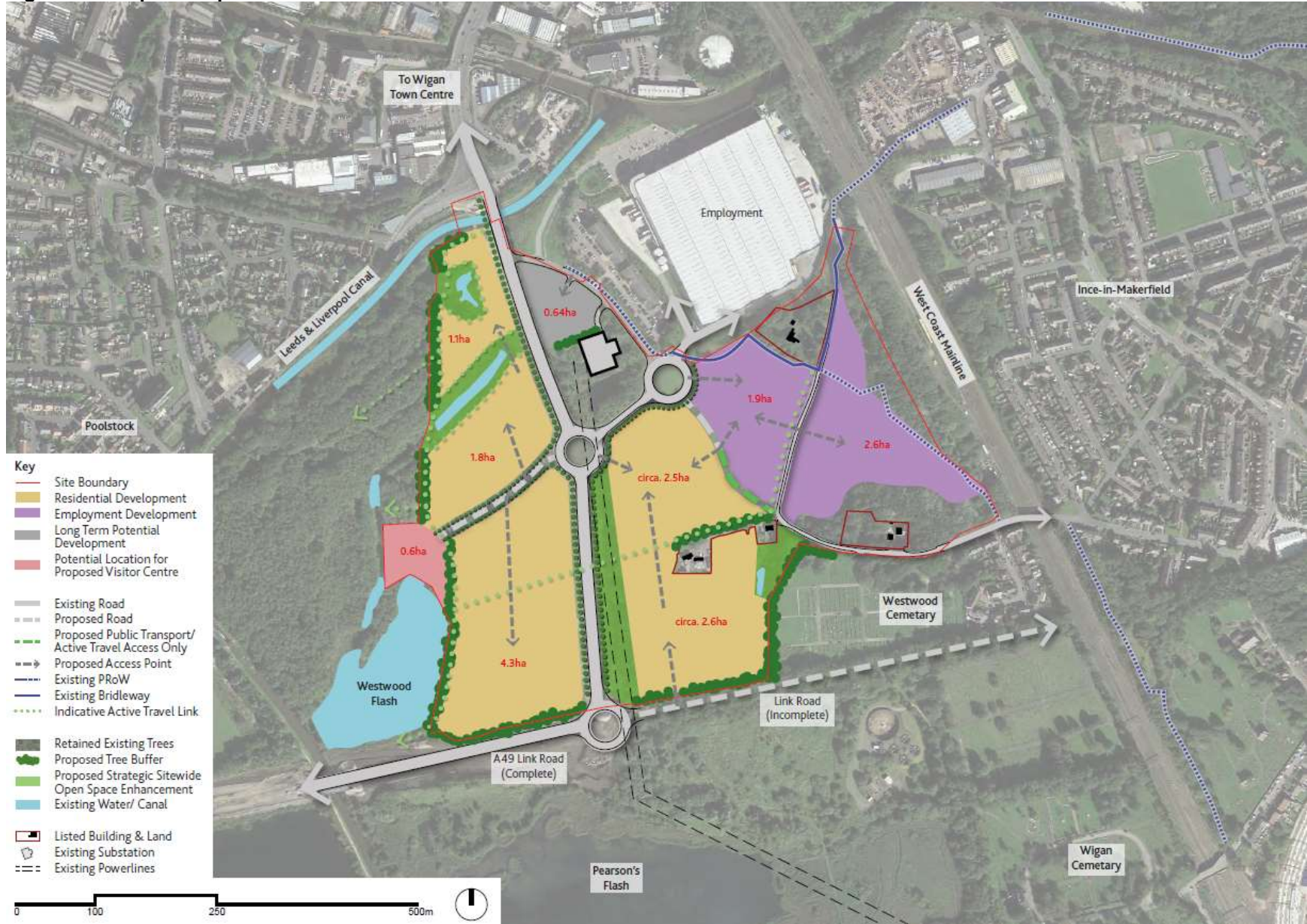
- **Residential** - as set out in Section 4 it is recognised that Westwood Park has the potential to create an attractive new residential neighbourhood. There is scope for a mix of housing which responds to a range of needs and creates a quality place harnessing the opportunities of the Wigan Flashes and connectivity to the Town Centre and the wider offer.
- **Employment** - Westwood Park is an established employment area and recent investment in its highway infrastructure further enhances its attractiveness for employment uses.
- **Retail** - there is scope to include a small amount of retail uses - local convenience/road side uses - which serve the needs of the existing and potential residents and workers from the existing and proposed employment uses and local/passing trade. A retail destination such as a supermarket would not be considered appropriate.
- **Visitor Centre** - there is a long held aspiration to create a visitor centre for Wigan Flashes at Westwood Flash, as proposed in the lapsed planning permission. Plans for the visitor centre (up to 250 sqm) have previously been prepared for various education, health and interpretation activities, as well as an operational base for Lancashire Wildlife Trust (LWT), who manage the Flashes. It is recognised that the Flashes are of local wildlife significance (designated a Site of Biological Importance), and that currently the landscape is very much a hidden gem, with no formal access from the western side of the borough. As shown in Figure 5.1 the visitor centre would require a site area of around 0.6 hectares, including a dedicated car park for around 40 vehicles, and would need to be accessed through the Westwood Park development. The proposed Centre would be an integral part of the Council's Wigan Greenheart Programme and also link to the GM Carbon Landscape programme. The Council have access to some capital funding to support delivery of the proposed visitor centre. Consequently, it is not envisaged that its delivery will be reliant on additional contributions from the developer of this scheme. The Wigan Flashes is also the focus of a partnership project between Wigan Council and Natural England which is looking to develop an evidence base to support a potential designation of the Wigan Flashes complex as a new 'urban' National Nature Reserve. Due to issues including avoidance of habitat disturbance, amenity value, road access and security of the site, the preferred location is on the corner of Westwood Flash which will also serve to buffer the SBI from new development. The Council will work

with any developer of the site to ascertain the viability of the Visitors Centre and how this might be accommodated in the final scheme. Should it not be possible to include this element of the scheme the Council will agree an alternative land use through the planning process.

- **Car parking** - appropriate provision of car parking will be required to support the potential land uses identified above.
- **Open space** - appropriate provision will be required to support the land uses identified above. The proposed spatial plan (Figure 5.1) identifies areas of strategic open space and landscaping including open water, pocket parks, linear parks and screening and planting. In addition to this strategic landscaping, individual schemes will be required to provide appropriate plot specific open space and landscaping in accordance with relevant planning guidance, including the Council's Open Space in New Housing SPD.
- **Access** - each plot will have specific access requirements, however these need to add up to create a cumulatively connected area, where permeability both internal to the area and through it is enhanced. Crossing points off and access points to the new link have been developed and the overall access scheme needs to relate to these, creating attractive desire lines for all modes. While respecting that some users may need enclosed secure boundaries due to the nature of their businesses the general aim is to ensure that access needs are resilient and permeable. Care needs to be taken to ensure that active travel is promoted, and that constraints such as the existing bridge over the West Coast Mainline to the east are not overburdened, or create adverse impacts on local communities. While vehicular focus should be onto the new link there is the opportunity to create excellent cross-site cycling and walking provision to complement the north-south routes provided alongside the new link road and those alongside the canal corridor. The potential to gain access to the central plot from the south off the A49 link road (future phase) should be investigated as part of the detailed design for the link road.

5.3 This document does not set a minimum or maximum quantum for residential or employment uses. This will be determined through schemes that respond to the policy principles and market context. If full planning permission, or a Reserved Matters approval, for employment development is not secured on the land identified for employment uses within 5 years of the adoption of this brief, the Council will consider alternative uses if the applicant can demonstrate that there is no current or likely future viable demand for employment use on the site. This will need to be supported by evidence that the site has been proactively marketed, including through channels agreed with the Council for a reasonable period of least 2 years during normal conditions, and at a price agreed with the Council and evidenced as an appropriate level of return.

Figure 5.1 Proposed Spatial Plan



6.0 Urban Design Principles

6.1 The following urban design principles summarise the key guidance for development at Westwood Park. These guides should be clearly reflected in development proposals and articulated in the design guidance and principles that form part of any submissions.

Scale and Massing

- The scale of development should reflect the context
- Use of prominent road frontage on a key route into Wigan Town Centre along Westwood Way should be harnessed with the largest scale of development being most suitable at key nodes or gateways locations
- Generally the expectation will be that the majority of the dwellings will be houses rather than apartments
- Dwellings should have a reasonable amount of private amenity space, in accordance with minimum interface distances and guidance set in the Council's Residential Design Guide
- Dwellings should be well designed in relation to their setting. Dual aspect properties will be expected on corner plots. Blank facades and boundary treatments (fences/walls) should not interface with open spaces, streets or green links
- Appropriate interface distances between homes will be expected in accordance with the New Residential Development SPD
- Car parking should not dominate the street scene and should be located within the curtilage of properties where possible in accordance with the New Residential Development SPD
- Further guidance on the design of new residential developments can be found in the New Residential Development SPD.

Sustainability

- Minimise environmental impact - all development should seek to minimise environmental impact during construction and in its ongoing operation through design including the use of materials, recycling of water, provision of electric charging points etc.
- Design Standards - development proposals are expected to perform positively against the Building for a Healthy Life (BHL) standard and should aspire to the Building for Life 'commendation' rating - this is at least nine green lights and no red lights. Building for a Healthy Life will be used as a tool throughout the planning process to optimise the quality of the development against each criterion.
- Strategically integrating SuDS (sustainable drainage systems) during and after the development phase can also mitigate environmental impact and prevent flooding. The development should promote controlled surface water discharge into existing flashes to the south and west, canal to the north and surrounding woodland to the east. Infiltration should also be promoted across the site based on further surveys and testing undertaken by the developers.
- Air Quality - all development should seek to reduce the impact on air quality by reducing the need to travel by car, tree planting, incorporate electric vehicle charging points etc, further details are set out in the Council's Development and Air Quality SPD.

- Ecology - the proposals will be expected to adopt best practice in bio-diversity and aim to support the commitment to net biodiversity +10% in line with emerging GMSF Policy and the emerging Environmental Bill.
- Zero carbon commitment - development proposals should seek to incorporate measures to support the Council's commitment to be zero carbon by 2038.

Connectivity

- Active Streets - the overarching aim is to create safe and attractive streets for all users, in particular pedestrians and cyclists and the young and elderly. New homes should face onto attractive streets providing natural surveillance. A clear hierarchy of streets should be established. Streets should be legible and easy to navigate. New streets should connect to the existing street pattern to enable permeability across the estate. The lower tier streets should prioritise pedestrians and cyclists and consider Home Zone principles such as shared space. Where possible permeability should be created between all land uses, encouraging active travel and creating economies of scale in provision. Connectivity to and from established neighbourhoods will be welcomed, but only where adverse traffic impacts are not created.
- The design and layout of homes and streets should promote the principles of healthy communities by creating attractive, useable spaces that enhance the physical and mental well-being of residents of the estate. Design should help to enhance a new neighbourhood whilst creating better links between the new development and the surrounding neighbourhood and streets should create a visual connection and links with green spaces. Good design should seek to maximise integration between plots and provide economies of scale in infrastructure provision by linking developments together
- Locations of pedestrian and cycle crossings should reflect desire lines and link to those provided as part of the new link road. The relationship between the new residential development and existing/new employment space is particularly important, as is the connectivity to open spaces including Wigan Flashes. Consideration should be given to pedestrian crossings and approaches such as shared surfacing to prioritise pedestrians and create a safe environment. Cycle parking and amenities should be at the heart of all proposals, given prominence and priority within development plots to help maximise usage.
- The layout should accommodate bus services and include cycle/walking routes to make logical journeys through the site, avoiding cul-de-sac movements and with priority links where possible and appropriate. The potential to create such links from the Ince area through the site then towards Wigan is a strong opportunity.
- Consideration should be given to upgrading of existing formal and informal links, creating better connections from Ince towards this economic and leisure focussed area, and therefore maximising access to employment and the great amenities around the canal and flashes.
- Mobility Access - all proposals should maximise the ability for mobility accessibility rather than simply meeting current standards. Seizing the opportunity that the attractive setting of the Flashes creates for both mobility and wellbeing is important to include in transport terms.
- Servicing - appropriate consideration will be required to ensure that all uses can be adequately serviced with minimal impact on public realm and neighbouring uses. Bin storage should be incorporated in the design to avoid bins cluttering the street.

- Future Ready - we anticipate that all sites should be developed with future ready transport at the heart of thinking. This includes provision for Electric Vehicles, green modes and ideally considering how energy and digital infrastructure can correlate with transport provision to provide solutions that interrelate as we move towards carbon neutral. With the significant move towards Electric Vehicles and forthcoming changes in legislation EV charging points will be expected at all residential and employment locations (including for visitor use).
- Any proposals will be expected to include travel plans.

Strategic Landscape and Green Infrastructure

- Open Space - provision of 25 sqm of public open space per dwelling on site will be expected, and financial contribution for play equipment/maintenance. There will be a requirement for formal and informal play provision within Westwood Park. These proposed open spaces will be located throughout the site and connected by strategic green links to form an overall green infrastructure network. Open space should be designed to relate well to the surrounding homes and link to the surrounding area, be well defined and have a clear purpose, should be overlooked, with new housing development oriented towards open spaces. Instances where rear boundaries front onto open space should be avoided. Opportunities for play should be incorporated in open spaces to provide a variety of recreational resources for the community. Naturalistic, low maintenance planting and features can create a playable landscape. It is crucial to ensure all areas identified for play to be located within easy reach of the strategic green links and have good levels of natural surveillance from neighbouring areas. Shaded areas with seating and cycle parking space should also be provided in all equipped play areas.
- Green and Blue Links - the layout of development should enhance the existing public rights of way within the site, in line with the proposals in the Rights of Way Improvement Plan which will strengthen the north-south and east-west pedestrian and cycle connections to provide sustainable links for residents both within the proposed residential scheme and to nearby facilities and onwards towards Wigan Town Centre. New homes should relate well to green links, the Flashes and the Leeds Liverpool Canal and where possible directly overlook these spaces. It is a key aspiration for new development to integrate well with the Flashes to enhance accessibility and awareness of this local asset. Key links include to; Wigan and Westwood Flashes, Poolstock, Ince and Wigan Town Centre including the canal and to the Wigan Pier to the north west and the wider Flashes to the south. Wildlife corridors are to be continued through the proposed open spaces, retained tree groves and flashes and linked to corridors outside the site. SuDS features are to be integrated into the overall network of green and blue links and supplemented where appropriate with wetland planting. Green infrastructure within the site should aspire to meet Building with Nature Standards (<https://www.buildingwithnature.org.uk>). Building with Nature is a green infrastructure benchmark, with the aim of ensuring that future developments create quality places that deliver for the natural world whilst also creating healthy communities.
- Trees and Landscaping - on site provision of landscaping will also be required and expected. There are some significant trees both within and close to the development sites but additional tree planting will be expected within the proposed schemes. Trees define the character of place as well as contributing to biodiversity and air quality. Trees should be retained in the development and measures taken to protect them during construction activity. Where there is a demonstratable case to fell trees, opportunities for replacement planting should be sought. Opportunities for new tree planting should be considered as an integral part of the landscaping strategy and should adhere to BS8545: 2014 'Trees from nursery to independence'. Among the proposed open spaces across the development, all good quality existing woodland,

hedgerows, trees and shrubs will be retained within the layout of the open spaces and enhanced with improved management. New trees, wildflower grassland and shrubs should be planted to supplement existing vegetation. Where possible, species poor hedgerows should be retained and diversified to improve biodiversity. Planting mixes should be based on native species identified in the local area and are suited to the soil and habitat type. Habitats should be enhanced through appropriate management and habitat creation. Developers will be expected to demonstrate how their proposals support and enhance the existing.

- Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) - BNG is an approach to development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before. Habitat retention, enhancement and creation should be required within the scheme landscaping strategy to ensure a gain in biodiversity units post development.
- Habitat Management Plan - a habitat management plan should be provided to ensure the success and efficacy of mitigation. This should include planting at appropriate times of year to ensure successful establishment and growth. Species selected for planting should be native and of local provenance, where suitable. Any non-native species utilised shall, where possible, provide a nectar resource for invertebrates. Flowering plants should provide sequential foraging resources throughout the year. Consultation must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist to support the integration of ecological mitigation within the site design during future development.

Historic Environment

- Appropriate consideration should be given to the listed buildings on the site which are to be retained.
- The design of the scheme will need to minimise impact upon the setting of the listed buildings by careful consideration of and mitigation through layout/orientation (proximity of new development), scale and massing, views, landscaping, detailed design and materials.
- Heritage Statement - proposals will be expected to be supported by a heritage statement assessing the significance of the asset and the impact of the proposed development.

Phasing

- It is anticipated that the development will be phased and this in part will be driven by the disposal strategy for the site. This Planning Framework does not impose a specific phasing programme. Whilst it is not anticipated that all development sites will be developed simultaneously, it is expected that more than one site will be under construction at any one time in the development programme.

7.0 Planning Application

- 7.1 Details on the Council's current expectations in terms of any planning application can be accessed on the Council Developer Hub <http://previewwigan.wigan.gov.uk/Business/Property-and-Land/Developer-hub/Planning.aspx>. This provides pre application advice and a validation checklist setting out what information will need to be provided to support planning applications and the potential need for EIA screening. Pre-application engagement is strongly encouraged given the scale and nature of the development of the Site. The wider Developer Hub (<https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Business/Property-and-Land/Developer-hub/Index.aspx>) also provides sign posts to land and finance resources.
- 7.2 We anticipate a comprehensive planning application that deals with this site strategically and as a whole, rather than on a piecemeal basis.

Planning Obligations

- 7.3 Planning contributions are likely to be required in relation to:
- Affordable homes provision (on/off site)
 - Open space and play space/equipment
 - Education provision
 - Highways/Public Rights of Way
 - Health provision
 - Tree planting
 - Air Quality.
- 7.4 Policy CP6 of the Local Plan Core Strategy requires the provision of 25% affordable housing on all sites consisting of 10 dwellings or more subject to viability.
- 7.5 Saved UDP Policy R1E (Open Space in New Housing Developments) provides guidance on the thresholds and level of provision. The Council's Open Space in New Housing SPD, sets the level of financial contribution per dwelling which is currently £1,729 per dwelling if no onsite open space or play provision is provided. This figure is reviewed annually, and will be discussed as part of any pre-application engagement undertaken. The Council seeks to ensure that this scheme benefits the wider community and supports the aims of the Wigan Town Centre Strategic Regeneration Framework.
- 7.6 Planning contributions may be required for both primary and secondary education provision, if there is considered to be a lack of capacity at nearby schools to meet current or future demand arising from the new residential developments. This will be informed by information from the Council's education service as part of the planning applications process
- 7.7 Contributions may be required for health facilities in the area. This will depend upon the capacity of existing facilities in an accessible location from Westwood Park and evidence should be provided as part of the planning application. This will be considered in consultation with the local health service at the time of the planning applications.
- 7.8 Contributions toward highway infrastructure including new and enhanced walking and cycling routes and green infrastructure linkages may also be required depending upon the detail of the proposed development scheme. Highway infrastructure contributions should be informed by a comprehensive Transport Assessment.