

Report of:	Meeting	Date
Councillor Peter Le Marinel, Planning Policy and Economic Development Portfolio Holder and Marianne Hesketh, Director of Communities	Cabinet	17 July 2024

Wyre Local Plan to 2040 – Issues and Options

Key decision: Yes

1. Purpose of report

1.1 To seek approval of the Wyre Local Plan – Issues and Options document (Appendix 1) and Potential Development Sites (Appendix 2) for public consultation to commence in July 2024.

2. Council priorities

2.1 Support people to help themselves and live independently in their own homes.

2.2 Provide opportunities for people to lead healthy and active lifestyles.

2.3 Develop Wyre’s town centres to be thriving and welcoming places to live, work and visit.

2.4 Support and champion Wyre’s growing tourism economy by promoting our coast to countryside offer, tourism businesses, attractions and events.

2.5 Encourage local people to develop new skills to access better paid work.

2.6 Promote and support low carbon businesses and jobs.

2.7 Ensure our towns and villages are supported by integrated infrastructure.

2.8 Work with partners to reduce the risk of flooding to homes and businesses across Wyre.

2.9 Provide high quality parks and open spaces for everyone to enjoy.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1** That Cabinet approves the Wyre Local Plan - Issues and Options document (Appendix 1) and Potential Development Sites (Appendix 2) for a minimum six week public consultation to commence in July 2024.
- 3.2** That minor amendments to correct factual errors or improve the clarity of the document and which will not materially affect the content of the Wyre Local Plan - Issues and Options document be agreed by the Assistant Director of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Planning Policy and Economic Development Portfolio Holder, as necessary, before the document is published for public consultation.

4. Background

- 4.1** The Town and County Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 prescribe the general form and content of local plans and the necessary stages to be undertaken.
- 4.2** The new Wyre Local Plan will cover the period 2022-2040, reflecting government guidance that a plan should look 15 years into the future, whilst also being reviewed every five years.
- 4.3** An initial regulation 18 Local Plan Scoping consultation and Call for Sites was undertaken in early 2022 to seek views on the scope of the new local plan, the evidence base required to support it and to seek potential sites, land or buildings with the potential for development or designation. A further general Call for Sites and onshore wind energy was undertaken in 2023.
- 4.4** This iteration of the Local Plan will form part of regulation 18, it is known as the Issues and Options stage. This stage does not include detailed land use policy wording or allocate land for development, instead its purpose is to highlight and consult upon the key planning issues for Wyre and the range of options or recommended approaches the Local Plan should consider to tackle the key issues identified. The Issues and Options is an important early stage in involving the community before any decisions are made.
- 4.5** Representations received on the Issues and Options stage will be considered and will help to inform the preparation of the draft Local Plan. The draft Local Plan will undergo a further public consultation prior to being submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for public examination by 30 June 2025.
- 4.6** The Local Plan Issues and Options consultation draft is attached as Appendix 1. To date in drafting the consultation document, officers have engaged with members through the Planning Policy Working Group. The working group has met to consider the plan's emerging evidence base and

overarching approach. In addition, meetings have been held to inform members of the Call for Sites submissions and explain the plan making process.

- 4.7** At this stage in drafting the plan various pieces of key evidence continue to be prepared. Documents will be available online as they are completed.
- 4.8** A Sustainability Appraisal is also being prepared to accompany this consultation and will form part of the consultation package of documents. The Sustainability Appraisal sets out a broad range of sustainability objectives that has been used to test the economic, social and environmental impact of the proposed options. The Sustainability Appraisal helps to inform the plan making process and ensure the most sustainable options are taken forward.
- 4.9** The Local Plan once formally adopted will form part of the statutory development plan for Wyre and will be used to determine planning applications.

5. Key issues and proposals

- 5.1** The Issues and Options document is set out in eight chapters:
 - 1. Introduction
 - 2. Context
 - 3. Spatial Portrait
 - 4. Key Issues and Challenges
 - 5. Vision and Objectives
 - 6. Spatial Strategy
 - 7. Approach and Policies
 - 8. Identifying Suitable Housing and Employment Allocations
- 5.2** The Spatial Portrait describes the Borough covering matters including spatial characteristics, population and society, housing, economy, environment, heritage and the built environment and infrastructure. It establishes the baseline and highlights the key challenges that the Local Plan will need to consider in ensuring sustainable communities in the future.
- 5.3** The Key Issues section sets out the important matters that need to be addressed by the Local Plan. The consultation does not seek comments or answers to the issues but rather whether there are any other issues that need to be considered. The issues identified cover the growing imbalance in the population structure in the Borough, the need to make provision for the housing and employment needs of the Borough up to 2040, whilst protecting the integrity of the natural and built environment. Ensuring that the necessary infrastructure is in place to support growth is also important for achieving a sustainable future.

- 5.4** The Vision describes how the Borough will look in 2040 and the ten Strategic Objectives indicate how the vision will be achieved. Although the vision is aspirational it is also realistic and capable of being delivered. Both the Vision and Strategic Objectives seek to address the issues and challenges facing the Borough. The Wyre Council Plan has been considered in drafting the Vision and Strategic Objectives.
- 5.5** It is not possible at this stage in the plan making process to provide the precise number of additional dwellings or amount of employment land that will be needed. The work to determine this has not yet been completed. It is estimate that around 1,400 additional homes may be needed in addition to the existing site allocations in the current Local Plan. The quantum of employment development required has not yet been determined.
- 5.6** The Issues and Options document sets out the principles for four broad options for the distribution of housing and employment development. The options do not relate to retail development which in accordance with national planning policy must look to locate within existing centres.
- 5.7** The starting point in the implementation of any of the four options will be the use of previously developed land and other urban land to meet development needs. However, inevitably there will be a need for the release of areas of greenfield land around the edge of settlements under option 1-3, or in the case of option four, as part of the creation of a new settlement. There is no proposal to review the Green Belt.
- 5.8** The Spatial Strategy (chapter 6) identifies the following four options:
1. Fylde Coast Peninsula Main Urban Area Focus;
 2. A6 Corridor Focus;
 3. Sustainable Dispersal;
 4. New Settlement/Urban Extension.
- 5.9** These options have been developed taking into account emerging evidence and regard has also been had to the previous options considered in the current adopted Local Plan. For each option the document sets out the advantages and disadvantages. Under options 1-3, the proposals deliver the estimated need for around 1,400 additional homes. Under option four, significant public and private sector investment would be needed. To support this, be cost effective and overcome constraints that make projects difficult to fund, the new settlement would need a significant level of development (circa 3,000-6,000 new homes), that significantly exceeds the housing need for the whole borough over the plan period 2022-2040. This level of growth under option four would be in addition to development needed to support existing communities in the borough to remain sustainable. Under option four, the whole borough would be an area of search for the new settlement. Four indicative options for where a new settlement could be further considered are identified, which are influenced by opportunities to co-locate near to existing communities where existing services and transport provision could be further enhanced.

The availability of land and ability for it to be brought forward as part of a comprehensive development have not been considered at this stage.

- 5.10** A key element of the Local Plan is setting out policies which identify the amount of development we need to plan for and provide more detailed policies for specific types of development. The Approach and Policies section (chapter 7) explores different options for how we may tackle different themes for the new plan.
- 5.11** The Approach and Policies identifies the following themes:
- Supporting sustainable economic growth
 - Promoting vibrant retail centres
 - Meeting out housing needs
 - Our built environment and heritage
 - Our natural environment
 - Tackling climate change
 - Health and wellbeing
 - Delivering infrastructure needed to support new development.
- 5.12** Chapter 8, Identifying Suitable Housing and Employment Allocations, includes a series of maps (Appendix 2) presenting the gross list of development options in each settlement. The identification of any site does not necessarily mean that it will be allocated for development in the Local Plan as a whole or in part. Work is on-going in relation to whether these sites are deliverable and developable. This work together with the consultation feedback will feed into the site allocation process. The sites are being presented at this early stage before any decision have been made on allocations to enable comments to be made on constraints that may inhibit development or matters that will need to be taken into account and addressed should the site be allocated.
- 5.13** The scale of site allocations that are needed for the new Local Plan are unknown at this stage, it is likely that current site allocations from the existing Local Plan, that cover the plan period 2011-2031, will contribute significantly towards meeting the development needs for the new local plan.
- 5.14** Chapter 8 identifies there is theoretically land available to build approximately 8,862 homes and 60 hectares of employment land on a total of 56 sites. Some sites have also been proposed for mixed use development, which could include an element of housing and/or employment. The theoretical capacity of the option sites demonstrating the potential for 8,862 homes significantly exceeds the estimated need of around 1,400 additional homes. Therefore, only around 15% of the homes identified as a potential option at this stage are likely to be required for the new Local Plan.

6. Alternative options considered and rejected

6.1 None. The attached report follows government advice, guidance and regulation.

Financial, Legal/MO, and Climate Change implications	
Finance	There are no implications for this report. Consultation costs on the Issues and Options document will be met from existing budgets.
Legal/MO	There are no implications from this report. Consultation on the Issues and Option document is part of the Local Plan preparation procedure under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
Climate Change	The approval of the Wyre Local Plan - Issues and Options document and the Sustainability Appraisal can have a positive impact on the climate. This has the potential to be achieved through approval of more climate positive impact options being adopted into the local plan. The public consultation will elevate climate change considerations and the Sustainability Appraisal will support the Local Plans performance against economic, social and environmental objective.

Other risks/implications: checklist

If there are significant implications arising from this report on any issues marked with a ✓ below, the report author will have consulted with the appropriate specialist officers on those implications and addressed them in the body of the report. There are no significant implications arising directly from this report, for those issues marked with a x.

risks/implications	✓ / x
community safety	x
equality and diversity	x
health and safety	x

risks/implications	✓ / x
asset management	x
ICT	x
data protection	x

Processing Personal Data

In addition to considering data protection along with the other risks/ implications, the report author will need to decide if a 'privacy impact assessment (PIA)' is also required. If the decision(s) recommended in this report will result in the collection and processing of personal data for the first time (i.e. purchase of a new system, a new working arrangement with a third party) a PIA will need to have been completed and signed off by Data Protection Officer before the decision is taken in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

report author	telephone no.	email	date
Fiona Riley	01253 887235	fiona.riley@wyre.gov.uk	7/06/24

List of background papers:		
name of document	date	where available for inspection
None		

List of appendices

Appendix 1 – Wyre Local Plan Issues and Options 2024

Appendix 2 – Potential Development Sites