

Hyndburn Borough Council Core Strategy and Accrington AAP Examination

Examination Hearings

Tuesday 27th September 2011

Morning Session

Attendees		
Stephen J Pratt	Planning Inspectorate	SJP
Michael Walker	Programme Officer	MW
Ursula Reilly / Steve Watson	Note taker	
Hyndburn Council Team		
Simon Prideaux	Head of Planning and Transportation	SP
Joanne Macholc	Principal Planning Officer	JM
Farooq Rafiq	Assistant Planning Officer	FR
Other Participants		
Susan Bolton	Graham Bolton Planning Partnership representing Dale Property Services	SB
Philip Whitehead	Countryside Properties	PW
Tim Rainbird	Quod Planning representing Omega Atlantic	TR
Andrew Gardner-Chan	resident	AGC
Roy Chetham	Huncoat Community Forum	RC
Sarah Worthington	Peacock and Smith representing RSPCA	SW
Andrew Kirby	Northern Transport Ltd representing D & J Leitherd	AK
David Leitherd	D & J Leitherd	DL
John Leitherd	D & J Leitherd	JL

SJP	Welcome and domestic arrangements and Health & Safety
7 A	Area based Policies Accrington & townships
SJP	Admin and procedural matters regarding consultation on proposed changes they are for his consideration and he is instructing the Council to do it.
SP	Council constitution requires Cabinet approval, can dela with under urgent business. Already put in motion. Examination needs to completedd asap

SJP	<p>Clarified status of draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Consultation draft may change NPPF - little weight to be given. By comparison "Planning for growth" is approved government policy.</p> <p>Plans of Huncoat prepared by Council and circulated to participants showing situation with proposed changes.. Council will introduce debate. Document 2.19g covers Council's response</p>
JM	<p><u>a.i. Amount and distribution of housing in Accrington</u> 75% new housing = 2400 houses. SHLAA indicates most potential sites to be within Accrington and townships. SHLAA shows total 3744 potential dwellings of which 2389 in Accrington and townships.</p>
SJP	<p>what about the rest?</p>
JM	<p>Near enough. Of 429 committed dwellings 90% in Accrington and townships.</p>
SP	<p>Details - started work on neighbourhood plans, talk to members regarding sites to be developed to ensure we have sufficient land. Satisfied sufficient land.</p>
SJP	<p>2389 in SHLAA – does it include proposed site in Huncoat?</p>
JM	<p>No. 400 in Huncoat is additional to the 2389 – and exceeds requirement figure.</p> <p><u>b.i. Accrington Town Centre</u> Accrington to be principle centre in Hyndburn. More detailed policies in t to Accrington AAP. Covers office development town centre – retail and offices, housing sites identified.</p> <p><u>c.i. local centres</u> Clayton-le-Moors is local centre in terms of PPS4 – Yes. Local Centres. Not covered by retail study. Regular health checks 2007 and 2010 Did retail impact assessments cover local centres? Yes catchment of for supermarkets impact assessments was extensive. Application for small Tesco in Oswaldtwistle recently.</p>
SJP	<p>Referred to Leeds/Liverpool Canal policy</p>
SP	<p>No issues</p>
SJP	<p><u>d.i. Brookside Business Centre – employment site.</u> <u>why is ther a need to amend Green Belt boundary></u></p>
SP	<p>Former chemical works. Site is degraded negative impact, setting positive framework for development in line with Core Strategy. Brief to be prepared with residents and members. Current situation is that potential for country park still there. Recognise areas of Ecological importance, Accrington and Rossendale College involved desire to develop centre for</p>

	training young people in green initiatives, but spending cuts last year impact on aspirations. May look at in future.
SP	Hazardous substance etc revoked. No over-riding constraints to development. Zones also gone. Health and Safety Executive – dealt with. Other Health & Safety land issues need to be addressed, environmental impact assessment with Environment Agency. May not come forward early in plan period because of need to deal with contamination first.
SJP	PPG2 exceptional tests?
SP	addressed in Green Belt Topic Paper and Council statement.
	e.i. Huncoat (policies A7-9)
SJP	Summarised position of each participant
	<u>Dale Property</u> – Landowners of Huncoat Colliery. Support Strategy, Site available and viable. Referred to strip of land at Altham Lane in different ownership but also representing them today.
	<u>Tim Rainbird, Omega Atlantic Power Station</u>
	Core Strategy needs updating to reflect outcome of CPO and expiry of planning permission for WTP.
	Policy A8 and supporting text to be amended to delete reference to WTP, include reference to “enabling development” and refer to significance of Huncoat. Policy A9 main purpose of Whinney Hill Link Road is to serve Whinney Hill tip/quarry.
TR	SLR appearing today at Minerals and Waste examination today to discuss matter 12 and matter 5 on Thursday. Will be making same representations.. Feels no need for development. LCC overestimate capacity, other more suitable sites, CPO not confirmed.
SJP	<u>Northern Transport</u>
	Own site which has planning permission for employment development. Broadly supportive but would make flexible approach in terms of access and residential development.
SJP	<u>RSPCA Sarah Worthington Peacock and Smith</u> Wants site removed from Green Belt. Impact of noise from kennels on proposed housing needs to be recognised. .
SW	Poor planning to put high quality housing near noise source. Should be no burden on RSPCA for noise mitigation.
SJP	<u>Huncoat Labour Party (Dr G. Johnston not present)</u> Broadly Supports but want Central Huncoat site protecting form development.

	<p><u>Huncoat CF</u> Concern about the open space on Central Site is preserved.</p> <p><u>Andrew Gardner Chan</u> Essentially supports but concerns about status of Central Huncoat site. It should be designated as open space in Core Strategy Risks if not.</p>
SJP	Core Strategy says little about Central Huncoat Site. Where is this likely to be done and when will landowners to be consulted? – come on to this later.
e1	Specific reason for developing greenbelt?
SP	Introduced the Council's position –no new information, contained within Topic papers and Council's statement.
SJP	Order of discussion – housing issues to be dealt with first and then employment
RC	Has Mr Pratt visited all areas?
SJP	Yes and will again Comments by Dave Parkins made last week, out of date, Aware of DP's letter and has been accepted.
SJP	Letter accepted by Council as late representation – supports proposals. DP wanted to be here today.
SW	Fine in principle with the Huncoat Colliery but as they are aspirational houses, reason they are concerned is that new housing may be adversely affected by existing kennels.
SB	No concerns
PW	Self-introduction – no formal connection with the site. Want to work in partnership with Hyndburn Borough Council. Think appropriate for housing – 3 to 4 bed properties for retention and growth of region. Viable proposition for family accommodation. Potential good access links.
SJP	Would he be concerned about contributing to the link road?
PW	Not concerned about a proportionate contribution.
SJP	As a former colliery site – issues of land contamination and reclamation – are these a barrier to development?
PW	Not undertaken intrusive assessments but they are familiar with contamination (gave Oldham example)
SJP	Referred to the dire straits of housing market in Accrington plus land reclamation costs and WHLR contribution – would this affect delivery of site?
PW	There are local problems but access to mortgages is a national issue. The initial phase will be testing but as the site will be phased over a number of

	<p>years, it should accrue a return in the long term. The site has a niche market – countryside location and good connectivity to surrounding economic centres.</p>
SJP SP	<p>Is this a second phase site? (Core Strategy) Lot of work to be done first in partnerships with LCC, developers and stakeholders. Possibility of grant assistance for the link road.</p>
SJP SP	<p>Could any part of the site be brought forward without the link road? Not desirable.</p>
	<p>Site at end of link Road? – No in middle.</p>
AK	<p>Unusual to have all parties broadly supportive. Agrees with viability comments. Cost estimated £2m from Burnley Road - to Altham Lane (phase 1) - cost not definitive. Up front infrastructure costs could be an issue for developer– require investments at start. Need flexibility in terms of cost and nature of development, recognition of need for enabling development.</p>
SJP AK	<p>Is enabling development, housing development? Housing first but other options i.e. hotel, shouldn't be too prescriptive/restrictive on what and where. Supplementary Planning Document appropriate. Referred to plan circulated by Council, possible allocation of land they own.</p>
TR	<p>Point of clarity, Omega own more land than is shown on the plan. Considers other forms of economic development appropriate on employment sites as defined in draft NPPF. Retail high value use. Doesn't spell out uses.</p>
SJP	<p>Enabling development relate to employment sites rather than housing.</p>
SP	<p>Requesting more flexibility. Hyndburn Borough Council aware of importance of viability but this is not the sole consideration. Site 5 years away or more from development and economy will improve. Local Plan preparation (1994) viability was a concern then and additional land to the south of the power station was added as part of the allocation (the area that now has outline planning permission) High voltage cables a problem. Council also included additional land between Altham Lane and Railway – greenfield with no development constraints, except part passes over proposed Link Road. Would become isolated piece of greenbelt so made sense to include it. Appropriate balance between brown and greenfield sites. Area in centre of housing site has deep vertical former mining shafts. Site subject to reclamation scheme following closure of colliery but need to check extent. Flexibility– Need to keep support of residents. Council taking cautious approach. Proposals result in a mixed patterns of development over area as a whole and can complement each other. Housing – Council concerned if increase number of houses beyond that</p>

	<p>allowed for in Core Strategy. Impact of large new housing development on edge of centre housing sites and neighbouring local authorities.</p> <p>Retail – Concerned if advocate major retail use, may be scope for local retail use to serve local community. Cautious about scale. Other community uses may be appropriate. Scale is important and need to be able to exercise control.</p> <p>Site Allocations DPD will be important for Huncoat. Central Site will be considered for open space having regard to the Council resolution. It will be necessary to consult residents and owners.</p>
SJP	Employment Site is a 5-10 year site.
TR	If the site can be brought forward sooner, should be allowed (even if this means enabling development) – reference to Planning for Growth. Jobs & Growth key. 17 years nothing happened.
SP	Core Strategy takes planned approach to strategic sites. Other sites are well developed. Whitebirk I at advanced stage – 1 st phase of Core Strategy. Only a certain amount of demand for employment sites. Does not want to undermine other sites.
Sp	<p>Considerable amount happened 17yrs – LCC reached advanced stage with WTP, 2 built elsewhere, CPO.</p> <p>LCC no longer able to fund link road – why housing site important as could ensure link road. It would be difficult to justify Central Huncoat site contributing to the Link Road.</p>
11.25	Break
11.40	Resume
SJP	Is the Huncoat housing strategic and is it being allocated?
SP	Yes. Housing Site to provide 400 houses is strategic and allocated in Core Strategy which is amending greenbelt and allocating the site. Boundary of site is set but will not necessarily use whole of site – greenbelt boundaries to follow clear lines Further detail criteria will be included in the SA DPD and SPD. Background in Huncoat Topic paper.
SJP	Why is the Central Huncoat site not suitable or available?
SP	Council owns large portion of land to west of site - took note of concerns of residents not to develop. <u>Resolution of Full Council</u> – Central Site be retained as protected open space. Not available under Core Strategy. See Appendix 5.
SJP	Why not suitable
SP	Next to within Grove social housing, boarded up properties. Market issues. Playing pitches – material policy raised by residents of loss of pitches.

	Thought it suitable pre 1994 – Local Plan but not taken forward. Council now wants it protected.
AH	Recent Open spaces strategy – site assessed as amenity Green Space Playing Pitch Strategy. Retain and upgrade, underprovision of pitches
AGC SJP	Key dual nature of site council ownership Is the central Huncoat site shown on Huncoat extract of the Proposals Map? – central site marked and (other) map – absence of detailed Boundary. Key diagram pg 34 Core Strategy – anything on there indicating protected open space?
SP	Not shown
SJP	The Key Diagram shows an area of open space to be protected doesn't it?
SP	Yes, Central Huncoat area is shown
SJP	Why is it not shown as protected on Proposals map?
SP	To enable boundaries to be determined by site allocation DPD. CS only makes strategic allocations, open space not normally shown as a strategic allocation.
AGC SP	Concern that other owners may want to develop land for housing. If prospective developers of land at Upper Fields AGC referred to wished to seek allocation for housing development – to be addressed at site allocation DPD.
SP	Wishes of Huncoat community put forward through Community Forum and Labour Party and Councillors. Also petition. Community doesn't want land developed – not taken forward to Core Strategy – Site allocation DPD.
RC	Explained membership of HCF and who it represented. 3 strands Community Group (CF) – 10 -20 people, membership list. Public petition and Area Council meetings – covered much wider spectrum of population. Public attended as felt more open to them than recognised community group. Can't understand why Labour Party not in attendance today. All groups under impression boundary is as was outlined. Land marked on plan.
AGC	Questioned Council's stewardship of their land. Confirmed Council consultation.
SJP	Are there any adverse implications for developing housing site in proximity to the RSPCA kennels and employment/waste site?
PW	Countryside Properties responded - RSPCA – adverse implications? Noise Report
SP	Referred them to pg 11 of statement. Environmental Health consulted, identified buffer zone - area outside of which unlikely to be affected by noise. Large part of buffer zone within the clough which is protected for its ecology. Felt buffer zone identified by Environmental Health would not have impact on Dale Properties' land. Recognise RSPCA concerns about

	<p>potential complaints. Could work with them, mitigation measures might be possible - acoustic fence or noise barrier. Looked at Preston RSPCA site very close to residential areas, Council never received any complaints. Hyndburn Borough Council don't feel there is a problem but would address.</p> <p>Changes have been made FPC 55 . Additional Sentence to refer to presence of RSPCA</p>
SJP	<p>what about possibility of taking proposed link road as a Green Belt Boundary?</p>
SP	<p>Did look at variety of options but don't believe justification – Housing led option pg 36-37 Topic paper.</p>
SW	<p>Confirmed extent of RSPCA ownership – all around RSPCA yellow boundary and blue area all land to west up to Whinney Hill Road.</p>
SP	<p>Looked at some of the land owned by RSPCA to NW housing site couldn't justify further change to Greenbelt boundary except colliery. Greenfield Land.</p>
RC	<p>RC confirmed fields and hedgerows.</p>
SW	<p>Mitigation measures may be beneficial to proposed housing indoors. Still Concerned about housing allocation – nearer than had expected. Enjoyment of gardens may be affected.</p>
SJP	<p>Re – buffer zone. Any complaints from residents?</p>
SP	<p>No, but centre well established. Noise measures – Environmental Health comments – nearest properties in a dip. Enfield Road, closest 246 metres from RSPCA boundary, no evidence of any nuisance.</p>
SW	<p>Higher expectation from new residential properties. Negative factor – presence of kennels.</p>
SW	<p>Para 2.12 PPG2 – Green Belt boundary should last longer than plan period. RSPCA want to stay without causing nuisance. If WHLR goes ahead RSPCA land does not perform Greenbelt function. Should consider removing?</p>
SP	<p>Cannot justify removing further land. Need balance between regeneration and growth.</p>
SJP	<p>Could have allocated long term.</p>
SP	<p>Looking at period of 15 years. Didn't feel could justify. Proximity of housing boundary will be looked at in more detail.</p>
SJP	<p>Put Environmental Health comments in examination library. Referred to Preston site.</p>
SW	<p>If new centre measure inbuilt to address noise issues.</p>
PW	<p>Referred to other site in Manchester site where no noise issues</p>
SJP	<p>Is LCC Property Department aware of buffer zone?</p>
SP	<p>No</p>

The notes of this meeting are intended as a general account of the meeting and are not a verbatim record

AH	Ecological constraints overlap noise buffer zone. Topic paper refers to attenuation measures.
AGC	Referred to Topic Paper (Para. 4.15) incorrect measurements from Railway – are figures accurate.
SP	Yes – probably should be 100-500 metres