

Hyndburn Borough Council Core Strategy and Accrington AAP Examination

Examination Hearings

Wednesday 21st September 2011

Morning Session

Attendees		
Stephen J Pratt	Planning Inspectorate	SJP
Michael Walker	Programme Officer	MW
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
Anne Hourican	Senior Environmental Initiatives Officer	AH

	Economy & Employment matters.
SP SJP	<p>No procedural matters from Council.</p> <p>Introduced Steve Watson & Michael Walker Has CS, Council Statement, Economy Paper and Regeneration and Economy Strategy, Employment Land Study.</p> <p>Policy E1 & E2 Core Strategy.</p> <p>What changes are in Schedule of further proposed changes to Plan?</p>
JM	<p>Economy Section FPC2&3 inserts additional text in Paragraph 4.5 E1 introduces new text clarify 58 hectares of land. Additional text re: role and hierarchy of Town Centres. Moved from other policies elsewhere in plan e.g spatial Policies on Accrington and Rishton.</p> <p>Does not change substance of Core Strategy. FPC4: Para 4.7 supporting text to E1 clarifies basis for 58 hectares.</p> <p>FPC5: Introduces 3 new paragraphs, introduction of town centre text particular retail provision.</p>
SP	Confirms no other changes relating to Economy & Employment
SJP	What is the overall employment strategy, is it soundly based, justified and supported by evidence and does it reflect national policy and other strategies?
SP	Yes takes account of Pennine Lancs Issues, Economy Topic Papers,

SP	<p>Spatial Landscape Guide, Huncoat, Whitebirk, business completions. Summarise basic strategy for Economy & Employment.</p> <p>Outlined – The aim to create greater opportunity for local economy and need to respond to PL integrated strategy. 4 main aims – 1. Strategic Employment Sites - Whitebirk and Huncoat Whitebirk large site west of borough across M65, borders with Blackburn. 35 Hectares size. Identified as regionally important site. Planning Application has been pending a number of years. Now at an advanced stage. Not a new site - was in Local Plan.</p> <p>Huncoat Strategic site - very accessible location, large site. Also in Local Plan. Large part earmarked for Lancs Waste Disposal site and employment development. CPO to Waste Development Park not supported. Access supported but not Park. Access not technically supported.</p> <p>2. Need to supply sufficient Employment sites. 58 hectares of land allocated at E1.</p> <p>3. Policy E2 provide a framework for protection and modernisation of existing sites. 3 Categories good, adequate, poor sites. Provides framework for use by further DPDs. Based on Employment Land Study.</p> <p>4. Town Centres. Originally only in area based policies but now also in policy E1.</p> <p>Had particular regard to Economy, worked closely with Regeneration and PL Economic Strategy and reflects positions at Whitebirk and Huncoat.</p> <p>Regional Spatial Strategy also considered. Consistent with general approach. Positive framework for Economy - in line with 'Planning for Growth'.</p> <p>Maintain close dialogue with existing business e.g. proposed change of Altham Business Park to extend an existing successful business.</p>
SJP	<p>Council statement 4.1 b sets out how figure worked out for employment land provision. The 58 Hectares for B1, B2 and B8 employment land between 2011 – 2026 taken from from the Employment Land Study and based on historic uptakes and development rates.</p>
JM	<p>Confirms understanding. ELS set out 2 possibles scenarios for future employment land requirements. First based on Labour demand and second on historic take up. Labour demand gave rise to requirement of approx 17 hectares, which was considerably below historic take up. Council want adequate supply and good range and a positive approach. Therefore chose approach based on Historic take up and which is evidence based. Past take up rate 3.14 hectares per year = 51 hectares over 15 years.</p>

	Further allowance of 7 hectares for shortfall 2004-2009 equates to 58 hectares.
SJP SJP	Referred to Employment Land Study Para 3.10, on page 50 Para 7.4 labour demand 19 Hectare to 2021 from 2004 -2021. Historic demand for 2004-2021 created 58 hectares. CS has different time period of 2011-2026 but includes same figure. What happens 2004-2011. Notes shortfall 2004-2009. Still missing 2 years.
JM	Shortfall partly covered in Economy Topic Paper and Table on Page 3 of Statement. However no complete record of take up of employment land.
JM	Rolled figure of 3.14 Hectare per year rolled forward to 2026.
SJP	Roll forward equates 51 Hectare, and for 2004-2009 added 7 Hectare
JM	No information on take up 2009-11. Core output indicators don't show take up of land. Will be measuring employment land take up as part of monitoring Core Strategy.
SJP	Has there been any major development 2009-2011 that may affect figures?
JM	Referred to table 3 of Statement (pointed out reference to 0.65 hectares in relation to site L on 31/3/11 should read 0 – site developed) which shows some development at Altham and Huncoat Sites E, L and some of M and N have been developed about 1.8 hectare, 0.65 hectare 3.6 Hectare, 0.15 Hectare between 2008 and 2011.
SJP	Is 3.14 Hectare per year most reliable figure?
JM	Yes. No challenges to overall figure. No-one questioned soundness
SJP	Need to see supply side picture.
JM	Summarised the position on allocated sites (29.92 hectares) in Local Plan and other sources of supply – totals 52.17 hectares. explained updates to Huncoat and Whitebirk as set out in statement. Huncoat Power Station is now 11 hectares and update on Whitebirk now includes 8.75 hectares for local employment needs
SJP	25% of Whitebirk site has been agreed, 5.27 hectares at Altham and additional land at Huncoat (Greenbelt included as Strategic Employment Site) 5.24 hectares totalling 52.17 hectares .
JM	Need to find approx 6 hectares to meet the 58 hectare requirement.
SJP JM	Will this be new land (not recycled existing employment land) Local Plan allocated sites will be new land.

SJP	How is extra 6 Hectares to be provided?
JM	Site Allocation DPD within the context of Core Strategy.
SJP	For housing Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments available; is there a study to identify Strategic Employment sites?
JM	No, Site Allocation DPD will identify sites.
SJP	Are there any other sources of employment sites?
JM	Done a call for sites and sites came forward.
FR	2008 call for sites land developed for employment. Potential pot is in excess of 6 Hectares.
SJP	Summarised - need 58 Hectares, got 52 Hectares and know where 6 hectares is coming from. No glitches that cause concern.
SJP	4.1.d The how much has been discussed Does the CS give information on when and where employment land will be provided?
JM	Don't apportion the employment land to the spatial areas of the Borough. Some new allocations identified in overarching Core Strategy. No phasing mechanism. Large Strategic Sites in Appendix 9 contains phasing of targets and infrastructure required and Infrastructure Topic Paper refers to strategic sites and includes who will bring these forward.
SJP	4.1.E Implications of statement "Planning for Growth" Makes distinction between current Government Policy now and those that might be (e.g. draft NPPF). Planning for growth policy is current government policy, how will Core Strategy help implement.
JM	The statement aims to promote Economic Growth which is already a thread through Core Strategy and PPS4. Need to maintain flexible positive environment to sustain economic growth. Impacts on environment considered. Sensitive that local economy subject to change and these are monitored.
SJP	Any additional economic data
JM	1.3 of Economy Topic Paper provides up to date information on economy.
SJP	Summarised position on local economy as per economy topic paper
JM	Doesn't need to be changed. Nothing else to add on E1.
SJP	Policy E2 deals with Protection, Modernisation and Development of Employment Sites Statement 2. 19d 4.2 explains that E2 derived from Employment Land Study

FR	<p>Employment Land Study most comprehensive and recent study, sets out those wish to retain and those to consider for other use, sets out good, adequate and poor sites.</p> <p>ELS undertaken by consultant suggested criteria based study</p>
SJP / FR	<p>Discussion of categorisation of sites in ELS, good, adequate, poor.</p>
FR	<p>Explained operation of E2 vis a vis exception (statement post_2.19d part 4.2a)</p>
SJP	<p>Confirmed compliance of E2 with PPS4, policies EC1.3d and EC2.1h.</p> <p>ELS done in 2008 which predates PPS4. Does ELS follow PPS4?</p>
FR	<p>Satisfied that policy conforms with PPS4. PPG4 had long standing requirement to review employment land which ELS included.</p>
SJP	<p>Did ELS look at take up during period?</p>
FR	<p>Yes, part of same study. Had evidence of need and prospect of take up so fits with new PPS4.</p> <p>With exception of Whitebirk 1 ELS looked at all undeveloped sites including all previously allocated local plan sites. Map produced as a result of the ELS.</p>
SJP	<p>Does the CS conform with EC2.1h?.</p> <p>39 Hectare or 30% of sites in ELS are poor and could be redeveloped for other uses. Would any poor sites be considered in SHLAA?</p>
FR	<p>Yes poor, adequate and good sites fed into SHLAA process.</p>
SJP	<p>Point raised by JWPC on behalf of representors requiring evidence of 18 months of marketing too onerous. Should be treated on merits, 18 months marketing not required by any other East Lancs Authority.</p>
FR	<p>Council has introduced additional flexibility by removing requirement for poor sites to undertake marketing.</p> <p>Gives certainty and clarity. If no take up likely will be released for other users. 18 months not an absolute requirement and can be reduced on site by site basis. Confirms not stated in text.</p>
SP	<p>Adequate sites have existing users which need to be protected but recognise need to be flexible.</p> <p>Proposals for redevelopment need to be justified.</p> <p>18 months not a lot of time to prepare proposals for major redevelopment.</p> <p>Emerging CS policy currently used, but not a local plan policy.</p>
SJP	<p>18 months requirement not in policy E2, only supporting text - could be</p>

	good legal debate.
SP	Will be further policy in relation to sites.
SJP	Council's position could be seen as too onerous but could be made more specific.
SP	Needs to be considered in relation to other considerations.
AH	Sustainability Appraisal records as positives - development in existing urban areas - brings people together. Productive re-use of sites for economic purposes prior to consideration for other uses.
SJP	Develop policy in more detail in subsequent DPDs Difficult to determine if requirement to market the site for 18 months is the issue. Why not 6?
SP	Reasonable period to give a realistic indication of any interest.
FR	Issue raised by representors appears to be the 18 month period rather than requirement to market per se. No alternative time period being suggested.
SJP	If proposal for mixed use and there is a need to market for 18 months would this delay in effect deliverability?
SP	No will look at equivalent. i.e. number of people who worked there. Need justification for changes to number of employees.
SJP	Will it reduce investment if requirement in neighbouring borough don't require 18 months?
SP	Can take takes 18 months for planning application preparation and consultation
SJP	Protecting existing employment sites. Footnote to E2 major industrial estates protected. How are other sites identified?
FR	Site Allocation DPD
SJP	Should Junction 7 Business Park be identified as a major industrial estate? Representation on behalf of Goldtique Venture limited from Dickman Associates. Current Planning Application for site Summarised Council's statement at 2.19d part 4.2c. Junction 7 good quality site under E2 listed at footnote. Consistent with Pennine Lancashire Spatial Strategy, page 22 Para 4.7. Will Pennine Lancs be investing in site?

SP	No the owners will be re-developing.
SJP	Can you comment if Junction 7 should be identified as a protected employment site under E2. Response to comment by Dickman. Plans for mixed used development.
SP	Should be identified under E2 - consistent with Pennine Lancs. document which seeks retention as an employment site, continued use as business park. Assumed to be a good site as per other existing business parks and industrial estates and not included in ELS. It's identification under E2 in justified as a good quality employment site.
SJP	Does it say that in ELS?
SP	Don't prescribe exact boundary of site so site allocation DPD will be look boundaries in relation to Planning Application. Para 4.4 of ELS mentions major business parks along M65; Whitebirk, Altham Business park and J7 and are key locations.
SJP	Site G at J7 in Local Plan remains undeveloped, should it be in site allocations table?
JM	Table on P3 of post_2.19d doesn't include site G. Was in use that made it unavailable.
SJP	May need looking at as potentially unused 3 Hectare of Land
SP	There are are parts of site that are undeveloped.
SJP	What is your response to strong objection to it being identified as a protected site.
SJP	Position is slightly contradictory as part of application is for a modern high quality business park . It is a superb location for a mix of uses.
SJP	According to objection it should be identified as a mixed use business site and include high quality detached homes.
SP	Other uses are comparatively minor, petrol station, hotel use and number of other uses, key uses for B1, B2 and B8 uses and also enabling uses i.e. Housing.
SJP	Would that be inconsistent with it being a protected site?
SP	No as boundaries have not been drawn. See it as an important site. Planning Application been submitted, extensive consultation with public and members. Outline Planning Application with highway agency considerations to be received

SJP	Maintain need to protect site as a major employment site under E2 with boundaries identified in subsequent DPD. Ancillary uses and enabling uses wouldn't be inconsistent with a protected site.
SP	Business park could include some ancillary uses such as small retail under PPS4
SJP	Retail matters: refers to proposed change to policy E1 which includes hierarchy of centres - also covered in area based policies . Consideration of CS in relation to PPS4. 2005 retail study was commissioned and identified need for additional convenience retail provision in Accrington up to 2015. Has scope for additional convenience provision been taken up by recent supermarket development
SP	Yes largely
SJP	Identified qualitative need for new additional floor space.
SP	Supermarket taken up some of this.
SJP	Are you happy due to retail development since original study there is no need to do another study?
SP	Yes and gave background to retail development and associated retail assessments.
SJP	Have you sufficient information to support retail strategy?
SP	Yes there has considerable interest in retail development. Great Harwood Tesco called in by Secretary of State, took up convenience need in area. Still need for comparison floor space. Tesco extra in Accrington submitted a retail impact assessment, Council commissioned an independent impact assessment. Felt was in line with White Young Green Study, position was Asda was overtrading. Asda been built over 20 years but refurbished recently
SP	Checked if alternative site in town centre i.e. Arndale but demonstrated there wasn't. Tesco largely convenience but some comparison floorspace.
SJP	Detailed study identified amount of comparison need.
SP	Taken up some of comparison need but by no means all. Looking to increase comparison at Arndale.
SJP	If adopted would 5 year review of Core Strategy require updated retail assessment.

SP	Yes
SJP	Policy E1 amendments to put flesh on policy on retail development Can you confirm you have regard to PPS4 when drawing up plan.
SP	Yes
SJP	There are 9 elements of PPS4 at EC1.3 that need to be addressed in Council's LDFs not necessarily Core Strategy
SJP SP	Requirement to assess need for all town centre uses. provided by Retail study 2005 plus all retails studies for all the various supermarkets.
SJP	Couldn't find assessment for need other than retail, didn't include Leisure for instance .
SP	Study included offices Accrington AAP looked at office uses.
SP	No assessment of need for Leisure uses.
JM	As part of Evidence based for Accrington AAP. Looked at different town centre uses.
SP	Accrington AAP does look at framework for other uses including restaurant and hot food provision
SJP	EC1.3c -Deficiencies in local provision shopping and peoples need.
SP	There has been considerable work on assessing convenience needs and no further scope for any major convenience.
SJP	Economic Development Sites have been reassessed in the ELS. EC1.3e Assessing capacity of centres for new town centre development and centres in decline.
SP	Done in relation to retail, identified of future role of various centres. Also done work on hotel development e.g have looked at former Conservative Club Cannon Street for Hotel development. Identified need for a budget hotel chain in Accrington TC.
SJP	EC 1.4a - take account of need for floor space for retail and leisure
SP	refers to Retail study
JM	Property market baseline study for AAP looked at range of issues in Accrington TC
AH	Recreational uses covered by Open Spaces and Play Strategy considered

	outdoor uses.
SJP	Acknowledged gap in assessing leisure need in town centre.
SP	Great Harwood and Accrington small centre and no significant pressure for addition leisure facilities provision.
SJP	EC3.1 Network and hierarchy of centres
SJP	Floor space threshold for edge / out of centre proposal requiring impact assessment . PPS4 threshold = 2500sq m.
JM	Matter to consider for site allocation DPD. In meantime PPS4 threshold would apply.
SJP	Currently nothing in Core Strategy in relation to threshold.
SP	Default position in PPS4. – Homework: need some text under FPC5 on floor space thresholds for impact assessments
SJP	othere matters at EC4.1/EC5.1 could be covered in Site Allocation DPD No established need for leisure development
JM	AAP covers range of town centre uses and allocates sites. 4.3C Basis and justification for hierarchy of centres: A2/A3/GH2/R2 set out hierarchy of centres. Retail Study covered hierarchy of centres. Text to add to E1 including hierarchy of centres. Supported by the retail study. Extent of centres to be identified in SA DPD. Further Town Centre retail survey in 2007 and 2010 confirmed hierarchy of centres.
SP	Vacancy level monitored through Regeneration Services in consultation with Planning. Look at rental values and have a town centre Regeneration Board that looks at utility of TC. Market run by the Council and meet often with Arndale as a key asset of Town Centre. Stats available on vacancy rates plus perception. Discussions were held with M&S re Tesco.
JM	Annual spatial monitoring report is provided by LCC includes information on zone A rentals and vacancy information based on GOAD data.
SJP	Where does Core Strategy deal with tourism, is it covered by cultural resources, is there a gap, or page 106 under cultural resources does this include tourism.
SJP	Covered in HC2 cultural facilities and AAP
SP	Accrington AAP has more specific reference on attracting people in to Accrington. Great Harwood is an important Market Town, referred to in text on Great

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

AH	Harwood. Local tourism also reflected in Green Spaces and Leeds Liverpool Canal policies.
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