HYNDBURN CORE STRATEGY
SCHEDULE OF MATTERS AND ISSUES FOR EXAMINATION

6. OTHER THEMATIC POLICIES

Key issue:

Does the Core Strategy provide an appropriate, effective and soundly based framework for the provision of a range of public facilities and services, high quality design, green infrastructure, protection of the natural and built environment, biodiversity and environmental amenity, sustainable development and climate change, and improved accessibility, which is fully justified and consistent with national policy?

A. EDUCATION

a. New and improved education (Policy ED1)

i. How will Policy ED1 help to provide accessible, high quality educational facilities and improve basic/higher level skills and qualifications?

Policy ED1 is a strategic policy that aims to provide recognition of the need to support accessible, high quality education facilities and to facilitate their development by providing a presumption in favour of this type of development. As explained by the Core Strategy, there is a need to raise educational attainment by providing access to a range of high quality educational and training opportunities. This in turn should help contribute towards the development of a more highly skilled workforce – the development of people with the skills that are needed.

The policy will provide a positive framework for later site allocations and development management DPD’s that are will to identify the locations of schools, colleges and academy’s within Hyndburn and any local constraints that need to be addressed as part of any development proposals. It is intended to facilitate development and ensure that the Core Strategy provides the strategic guidance that is needed.

When the policy was originally drafted it was in the context of Lancashire’s Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme. At that time, there were a variety of improvements proposed to schools in the Borough, however, the Building Schools for the Future was cancelled by the Coalition Government. Notwithstanding this, it is likely that schools and colleges will witness change over the period of the Core Strategy and it is important that there is a positive policy framework to support these developments.

The approach is consistent with that advocated by the recent letter (15th August 2011) from CLG to Chief Planning Officers that advised as follows:

“The Government believes that the planning system should operate in a positive manner when dealing with proposals for the creation, expansion and alteration of state-funded schools, and that the following principles should apply with immediate effect:

- There should be a presumption in favour of the development of state-funded schools, as expressed in the National Planning Policy Framework.
• **Local authorities should give full and thorough consideration to the importance of enabling the development of state-funded schools in their planning decisions.** The Secretary of State will attach significant weight to the need to establish and develop state-funded schools when determining applications and appeals that come before him for decision."

B. **HEALTH**

a. **Green Space and facilities for walking/cycling (Policy HC1)**

i. **Is the approach to providing additional green space from major housing development appropriate, soundly based and justified with evidence, including consideration of economic viability issues?**

   Yes, the approach is appropriate, soundly based and justified.

   The approach is consistent with existing and emerging national planning policy and it will contribute to high quality, attractive and functional developments in many ways which are fundamental to good planning and reflecting local needs.

   Existing policy guidance in PPG 17 states that “open spaces, sport and recreation all underpin people’s quality of life. Well designed and implemented planning policies for open space sport and recreation are therefore fundamental to delivering broader Government objectives”. In summary these relate to urban renaissance, rural renewal, social inclusion and community cohesion, health and well being and promoting more sustainable development.

   Green space, walking and cycling provision are also important elements in the response to Climate Change, offering practical solutions for mitigating green house gas emissions and providing for adaptation effects such as urban cooling, shade and reducing flood risk.

   Emerging policy guidance under the draft National Planning Policy Framework is also supportive of this approach. The core planning principles include

   • “planning policies and decisions should make effective use of land, promote mixed use development that create more vibrant places, and encourage multiple benefits from the use of land in urban and rural areas, recognising that some open land can perform many functions (such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk, mitigation, carbon storage, or food production)”
   • “…should take account of and support local strategies to improve health and wellbeing for all; and"
   • “..should always seek to secure a good standard of amenity for existing and future occupants of land and buildings.”

   This policy will contribute to Core Strategy objectives:-
   “To improve the quality and health of the residents of Hyndburn” and
   “To create a valued urban and rural environment”
Through the Sustainability Appraisal process, this policy was assessed to contribute positively to a large number of the sustainability objectives.

The health of people in Hyndburn is generally worse than the England and Wales average and there are striking health inequalities between different areas within the district. The current NHS Health Improvement Service Delivery Plan for East Lancashire has the following priorities:-

- Reduction in the harms from tobacco
- Reduction in the harms from alcohol
- Improved access and availability of a healthy diet
- Increase in the levels of physical activity

This policy approach can contribute strongly to increasing the opportunities for people to increase their level of physical activity by ensuring that appropriate and attractive spaces are available, easily accessible and form part of a multi-functional network to increase the likelihood of active enjoyment and usage. Some contribution towards improved access and availability of a healthy diet is also possible through the potential for some spaces to contribute to the vibrant local food growing network in the district.

The provisions of this policy are complementary to the intention to develop a multi-functional green infrastructure network as represented in Policy ENV1. The Site Allocations DPD will identify local needs and opportunities in more detail. This will include identifying key existing green space, walking and cycling resources where enhancement rather than new provision would be the appropriate approach. As is common current practice, this often means that new provision does not have to be made on site, making efficient use of developable areas, and enabling more effective use and management of the green space resources overall. To assist in identifying what provision is appropriate for individual developments, evidence from an Open Spaces audit carried out to fulfil the requirements of PPG17, the recently reviewed Playing Pitch Strategy, cross referencing to the Accessible National Greenspace Standards, mapping of cycling and footpath networks, and consultation with key interest groups. Standards for new provision will be set out in the subsequent Site Allocations and Development Management DPDs.

In terms of economic viability, the provision of open space to serve new residential development has been a policy requirement in the Hyndburn Local Plan and is a widely accepted integral requirement of new development. Attractive green space and provision for people’s leisure and recreation needs contributes to the economic vibrancy of the area and is also understood to contribute to higher property values.

This policy reflects current development management practice in relation to major development proposals. Provisions would relate to the scale and nature of individual development proposals. The policy also allows for contribution to off-site provision, which as noted above often means that the developable area may not necessarily be diminished. The Council have been taking a similar approach over the past 10 years (it is supported by the Hyndburn Local Plan) and this has worked successfully and developers have not objected to making contributions in this respect.
b. Leisure and health (Policy HC2)

i. Does Policy HC2 encompass all relevant types of leisure, health and cultural facilities, and how will the policy be implemented?

Yes, Policy HC2 does encompass all relevant types of leisure, health and cultural facilities. A specific addition was made to this policy, adding ‘cultural facilities’, in response to consultation comments, which were helpful to ensure that all relevant considerations are now covered by the policy.

Closely related provisions such as for educational facilities, landscape and biodiversity are covered by other policies.

This policy establishes a clear principle that leisure, health and cultural resources are key elements of providing for local community needs, with new provision to be supported and existing provisions retained where needed.

The approach is supported by emerging policy guidance under the draft National Planning Policy Framework, section 126 relating to delivery of community facilities and local services.

This provides a basis for implementation through the Site Allocations and Development Management DPDs. Key existing facilities and locality specific needs will be identified in the Site Allocations DPD and detailed policies will be formulated for inclusion in the Development Management DPD.

c. Design of Residential Roads (Policy HC3)

i. Is Policy HC3 in accordance with national guidance in PPG13 and the latest edition of the Manual for Streets?

PPG13 Transport was published in 2001 with a limited update taking place in January 2011. It sets out government’s aims to integrate planning and transport and to promote more sustainable transport choices. The 2011 update removed references to “maximum” parking standards but the general thrust of PPG13 is largely unchanged.

Paragraph 29 of PPG13 deals with the safety of a variety of users and states that planning can influence road safety through the control of new development. Policy HC3 by requiring developments to be designed with a reduced vehicle speed of 20mph accords with this guidance.

The original document ‘Manual for Streets’ (referred to as MFS1) was published in 2007 and replaced guidance that had been in use for 30 years. Manual for Streets 2 (MFS2) was published more recently in September 2010. Although this is the latest edition, it should be noted that MFS2 does not supersede the previous document but should be considered as a companion guide that compliments and builds upon MFS1.
Manual for Streets gives advice on the design of residential streets and introduced a new approach shifting the focus from movement along streets and towards the creation of a place. In addition to creating an environment that is safe for all, it sought to encourage more active patterns of travel (cycling and walking) which also contributes to the health agenda. The guidance within Manual for Streets 2 is aimed at filling the gap in design advice between MFS1 and the design standards for Trunk Roads, as set out in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges.

Policy HC3 seeks to amplify the messages within Manual for Streets with the aim of ensuring that all residential developments should be designed to reduce speeds to no more than 20 mph. This in accordance with the aims of Manual for Streets which recommends a maximum design speed of 20mph. Manual for Streets did not introduce new policy or legislation and given the road safety problems in the Borough, the inclusion of policy HC3 was seen as important.

Notwithstanding PPG13 and the Manual for Streets, the origins of Policy HC3 lie in a letter from the East Lancashire PCT to be Borough Council concerning the need to take positive steps to reduce the number of young people killed or injured on roads in East Lancashire. Reducing the speed of vehicles travelling in residential areas to no more than 20mph was considered to be one of the main ways of achieving this.

This is consistent with the advice in Manual for Streets and since the Borough Council advocated this approach in its Core Strategy, Lancashire County Council (acting in its role as Highway Authority) has introduced a requirement for all residential areas in the County to be subject to a 20mph speed limit as a means of reducing deaths and serious injuries. The adopted strategy of the Local Transport Plan sets out that improving road safety is one of the top three priorities in the early years of the plan (2011-2021). Delivery of the 20mph zones identified in LTP are a key action.

The Draft Implementation Plan for the Local Transport Plan 2011/12, published by Lancashire County Council in August 2011 also includes a commitment to “roll out 20mph schemes across residential areas and outside schools”¹ and a programme to roll out these changes in Hyndburn is set out on the plan at page 66 and paragraph 5.8.16 of the document which states:

“*The County Council has made a commitment to introduce 20mph limits in all residential areas and outside schools over the lifetime of this Implementation Plan. The map accompanying the local programme for Hyndburn shows the phased implementation of these schemes to neighbourhoods in Hyndburn district over the next three years.*”

**d. Community Benefits/Planning Obligations (Policy HC4)**

i. Does Policy HC4 accord with national guidance on Planning Obligations (Circular 05/2005) and emerging legislation/regulations/guidance on the Community Infrastructure Levy?

¹ At page 15.
Policy HC4 looks to set out the overall requirement for planning obligations from additional demand that is placed upon infrastructure from development. It sets out the overarching strategic policy framework within which more detailed policies in subsequent DPDs or supplementary information in SPDs can be developed.

The approach is consistent with national policy as the policy seeks developments to meet “the reasonable cost of new infrastructure” as opposed to seeking contributions to meet wider planning objectives. The supporting text makes reference to the tests Circular 05/2005 which the subsequent SPD on Developers Contributions will need to have regard to.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a levy that authorities can choose to charge on new developments in their area to fund infrastructure.

The draft legislation relating to CIL indicates that the scope of S106 planning obligations will be scaled back (in April 2014) but not removed. In this respect reference to S106 obligations within Policy HC4 is also in accordance with emerging legislation and guidance on CIL.

Should the Council decide to introduce CIL, a charging schedule will need to be prepared that is then subject to consultation and public examination. Policy HC4 would remain alongside any such CIL charging schedule.

C. ENVIRONMENT

a. Green Infrastructure (Policy Env1)

i. How will the policy effectively deliver the Green Infrastructure Network?

The Core Strategy policy establishes a clear principle that Green Infrastructure resources are to be protected, enhanced, and also linked more effectively to create a multi-functional green infrastructure network.

This provides a basis for implementation through the Site Allocations and Development Management DPDs. The approach will enable clear, advance planning for effective enhancement of green infrastructure, contributing to sustainable and high quality development.

The Site Allocations DPD will identify the key green infrastructure resources, opportunities for linkages, and opportunities for enhancements. This will be guided by audits and standards for green space provision, including an Open Space Audit carried out to fulfil the requirements of PPG 17, the recently reviewed Playing Pitch Strategy, cross referencing to the Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards, mapping of cycling and footpath networks, and consultation with key interest groups.

The policy provides for the protection of these key resources, which will include the essential need to avoid fragmentation of key linkages that could potentially occur through individual development sites. The policy also provides for developers contributions towards the enhancement of the green infrastructure network.
As noted in the response to Matter 6.D.b on cycle and footpath networks, there is existing good practice in Hyndburn where high quality local facilities have been provided or improved through combinations of developers contributions and other match funding from sources including National Lottery grants, the Local Transport Plan, landfill tax credit funds and other grant sources, together with investment from Hyndburn Borough Council itself.

Detailed policies will be formulated within the Development Management DPD and will reflect the relevant allocations identified by the Site Allocations DPD.

Emerging policy under National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) supports this approach in relation to the delivery of sustainable communities. Paragraph 124 states the Government’s objective to “create strong, vibrant and healthy communities.” And that to achieve this objective the planning system should “ensure access to open spaces and recreational facilities that promote the health and well-being of the community”. Paragraph 128 states that “access to good quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities” and paragraph 129 indicates that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless they are demonstrated as surplus to requirements or the benefits from development outweigh the loss.

This policy is also supported by NPPF paragraphs 130 and 131 relating to the new proposal for local communities to identify green areas of particular importance for designation as ‘Local Green Space’.

b. Natural Environment Enhancement & Landscape Character (Policies Env2-Env3)

i. How will Policy Env2 effectively secure the enhancement of the natural environment, including conservation and enhancement of the wider environment and the protection and promotion of biodiversity?

The Core Strategy policy establishes a clear principle that ecological and geological resources are to be protected, enhanced, and also linked to create an effective ecological network through expansion and re-connection of environmental resources.

This provides a basis for implementation through the Site Allocations and Development Management DPDs.

The Site Allocations DPD will identify the key ecological and geological resources, together with opportunities for enhancements, expansion and linkages.

The policy provides for the protection of these key resources, including the essential need to avoid fragmentation of key linkages that could potentially occur through individual development sites. The policy also provides for enhancements to be included within development proposals which will directly contribute to the ecological network in the
recognised way of providing habitat mosaic and ‘stepping stones’, particularly important within urban areas.

The Council expects that this detailed identification of the key ecological and geological resources, linkages and opportunities for enhancement, will be complementary and integrated with the Green Infrastructure Network. Detailed policies will be formulated within the Development Management DPD which will be related to relevant allocations in the Site Allocations DPD.

Emerging policy through the draft National Planning Policy Framework (dNPPF) supports this approach. Paragraph 163 states that the Governments objective is that “planning should help to deliver a healthy natural environment for the benefit of everyone and safe places which promote wellbeing”. Paragraph 164 states that to achieve this objective, the planning system should aim to conserve and enhance the natural and local environment by... “minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible”. The more detailed requirements of paragraph 168 of the dNPPF will be fulfilled by this policy together with the Site Allocations DPD.

ii. Does Policy Env3 and the accompanying text address all relevant landscape types?

Yes, Policy Env3 and the accompanying text comprehensively address all relevant landscape types occurring in the Borough.

The Landscape and Heritage Supplementary Planning Guide, Lancashire County Council 2006, has been reviewed to identify all of the landscape character areas that are relevant to Hyndburn.

c. Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Renewable Energy (Policies Env4-Env5)

i. How will Policy Env4 direct development to the most sustainable locations and effectively address issues related to climate change?

Policy ENV4 (a) seeks to reinforce the Balanced Development Strategy by reiterating the principle that new development should be in sustainable locations. As a general point, the balanced development strategy seeks to concentrate the majority of development within the urban area which given its compact nature will result in sustainable and accessible locations. Policy ENV4 (a) was enhanced in response to consultation comments, specifically adding the phrase ‘ensuring that new development is in sustainable locations’.

Policy ENV4 (a) provides the basis for further work to be undertaken in the Site Allocations and Development Management DPDs to assess the accessibility of proposed allocations and to guide the detailed implementation of future development proposals. It will provide the basis for Development Management considerations to improve the sustainability of development locations if required, for example through improved physical connections to the
walking, cycling or public transport networks and through the preparation and implementation of Travel Plans.

All of the elements of Policy Env4 (a) – (j) collectively and comprehensively address issues related to climate change, and will encourage development that deliver improvements in both mitigation and adaptation requirements.

The key approach to climate change mitigation is to support the ambitious national targets for reducing green house gas emissions. Policy ENV4 seeks to achieve this through seeking reductions in direct green house gas emissions from developments through reducing travel demand and increasing the likelihood for sustainable modes of transport to be used (Env4a), reducing energy demand (ENV4g), increasing water efficiency (ENV4c) and the incorporation of renewable or low carbon energy measures (ENV4e). Reductions in indirect green house gas emissions will also be encouraged through low impact products and materials together with ensuring that provision is made for sustainable waste management (ENV4b).

Policy ENV4 also addresses climate change adaptation by directing development away from areas at high risk of flooding and seeking flood risk mitigation in other areas (ENV4i), seeking the inclusion of sustainable drainage systems (ENV4d) and the inclusion of Greenspace, landscaping and habitat enhancements (ENV4f).

The need to include such enhancements in the existing building stock is also recognised by seeking the inclusion of these measures in change of use or extensions of existing buildings (ENV4h).

Through the Sustainability Appraisal process, this policy was assessed to contribute very positively to the sustainability objective to limit and adapt to climate change.

Detailed policies will be formulated within the Development Management DPD.

ii. Should the Core Strategy make further references to minerals and waste policies in Lancashire County Council’s Minerals & Waste Development Framework, including mineral resources and mineral safeguarding?

Although the Core Strategy makes reference in the first chapter to the fact that Lancashire County Council has responsibility for minerals and waste planning issues, this is through means of a footnote.

The Council would not object to the inclusion of an additional paragraph in the Core Strategy that addresses this issue in more detail. The following text is proposed to be included following paragraph 1.7:

“1.8 The Minerals and Waste Development Framework also forms part of the Development Plan for Hyndburn. This is prepared by Lancashire County Council in its role as minerals and waste planning authority. The Lancashire Minerals and Waste Core Strategy was adopted in 2009 and the Site Allocations and Development
Management DPD’s were submitted to the Secretary of State in 2011. As well as providing a framework for the determination of planning applications for minerals and waste development, the Minerals and Waste Development Framework also identifies areas of search for minerals within the Borough and areas where mineral safeguarding policies apply. The Minerals and Waste Development Framework also contains policies that concern Huncoat and the Whinney Hill Link Road and may therefore be material to the determination of future policy or planning applications for development in that area of Hyndburn.”

iii. How will Policy Env5 effectively assist in achieving national and regional/sub-regional renewable energy targets, and should the text reflect the findings of the Lancashire Renewal Energy Capacity Study 2011?

Policy ENV5 will effectively assist in achieving renewable energy targets by establishing the principle that the Council will be supportive of renewable energy developments, so long as the criteria set out in the policy are satisfied. The policy will act in combination with Policy ENV4 which seeks renewable or low carbon provisions within other development proposals.

This clearly indicates that the Council has a positive approach to promoting energy from renewable and low carbon sources, consistent with both existing planning policy and emerging policy under the draft National Planning Policy Framework.

A study was commissioned by Lancashire County Council to identify the potential for the development of sustainable energy resources across Lancashire on an area basis and to provide analysis and advice to support the increased deployment in the future. The study is now complete and the results are available in the following documents, “Taking forward the deployment of renewable energy”, “Lancashire sustainable energy study – Hyndburn renewable energy potential”, “Planning guidance for renewable energy”.

In Hyndburn, a significant commercial wind renewable energy development on Oswaldtwistle Moor has full planning permission, approved with conditions through an efficient decision-making process following extensive pre-application discussions, investigations and advance consultations with key stakeholders. The way that the Borough Council managed this application (determining the application with 13 weeks) has been held up as best practice. This development is expected to begin on site this year.

Not-with-standing this, the Lancashire renewable energy study suggests that there is further potential to deploy commercial scale wind technologies. This is subject to a much emphasised need for further detailed work to identify the deployable resource taking into account detailed constraints such as economic viability, planning and licensing issues. The study also identifies the potential to significantly increase the deployment of microgeneration technologies.

The Council suggests that a brief summary of the position set out above and a footnote reference to the study documents should be included in the supporting text. The suggested wording will be included in the Schedule of Further Proposed Changes.
d. High Quality Design and Environmental Amenity (Policies Env6-Env7)

i. How will Policy Env6 help to conserve and enhance the character and quality of Hyndburn’s urban and rural environments and ensure that developments of high quality design are delivered?

Policy Env 6 is a criteria based policy that seeks to conserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Borough’s urban and rural environments. This will be achieved by ensuring that new developments are designed to a high standard and the Borough’s heritage assets are protected.

The criteria listed (a to i) seek to ensure that development proposals take into consideration a variety of factors that can positively influence the quality of design. The criteria are based on a variety of documents that set out good practice in this field and these are referenced by the footnotes where relevant. Other criteria relate more specifically to Hyndburn. One of the aims of the use of a criteria based policy of this type is to encourage architects and developers to take a more systematic approach to the design of their proposals that reflects best practice. The Design and Access Statements that are submitted in support of planning applications would be expected to demonstrate that these criteria have been taken into consideration in the design of the development.

More detailed policies on design are likely to be included in the Development Management DPD.

ii. Does Policy Env7 cover all the relevant potential adverse environmental impacts, and how will it be implemented?

Yes, policy Env 7 covers all the main potential environmental impacts associated with different types of development. Those not specifically referred to are covered through the use of the phrase “….or other nuisances…”.

The presence of the policy should allow those submitting planning applications for development that may give rise to such impacts the opportunity to address those matters in their supporting statements. The policy is essentially a development management policy and was included on the advice of Government Office for the North West on the basis that such a policy was needed to facilitate the development of more detailed policies in the Development Management DPD.

D. ACCESSIBILITY

a. Improving Connectivity (Policy T1)
   i. Does Policy T1 give sufficient emphasis to guiding development to sustainable and accessible locations?

Policy T1 seeks to secure both within the Borough and outside it, improvements to the road and rail network subject to environmental and social impacts. The supporting text highlights
a number of strategic improvements to the transport infrastructure which are important in the sub regional context (e.g. the Pennine Reach Scheme, Todmorden Curve Rail Improvement) over the life of the plan but also recognises the importance of links at a neighbourhood level. Policy Env4 (Sustainable Development) is considered to be a more appropriate policy to deal with the issue of guiding development to sustainable and accessible locations rather than Policy T1 which is principally about improving strategic connectivity.

As a general point, the balanced development strategy seeks to concentrate the majority of development within the urban area which given its compact nature will result in sustainable and accessible development. More specifically, part a) of policy Env4 looks to ensure that all development is in sustainable locations, is accessible to goods and services and can be accessed on foot and by bicycle as well as improving links with public transport networks.

Further work will be undertaken in the Site Allocations and Development Management DPDs to assess the accessibility of proposed allocations and future development proposals.

b. **Cycle and Footpath Networks (Policy T2)**

i. How will existing/proposed cycle and pedestrian networks be identified, safeguarded and extended?

The Site Allocations DPD will identify the key existing and proposed cycle and pedestrian networks. This will be guided by a number of resources including:

- an Open space Audit carried out for fulfil the requirements of PPG 17
- cross-referencing to the Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards
- Mapping of key cycling routes carried out by Lancashire County Council in 2010. The published ‘Cycling in Hyndburn’ leaflet identifies existing and proposed cycle tracks together with some complementary features such as railway and bus stations and information points
- Public rights of way network
- Mapping and promotion of local walking routes such as through the Stepping Out programme of healthy walks, and a number of local waymarked trails such as the Jubilee Walk, Baxenden, the Huncoat Trail, and the Ladybird Trail, Great Harwood
- Consultation with key interest groups

Detailed consideration at the local level will include identifying potential opportunities for multi-functional linkages with other open space, leisure and recreational spaces, schools, workplaces, residential areas, linkages to public transport networks transport, significant development locations, and where there could be opportunities to positively contribute to health and well-being priorities. This detailed identification of the key cycle and footpath networks will be complementary and integrated with the Green Infrastructure Network (Policy ENV1) and Green space and facilities for walking and cycling (Policy HC1).

The policy provides for the safeguarding of these key resources, which will include the essential need to avoid fragmentation of key linkages that could potentially occur through individual development sites.
The policy also provides for developers contributions towards the improvement and maintenance of the cycle and footpath networks. There is existing good practice in Hyndburn where several new or improved cycleway and walking routes have been provided in progressive phases as developers contributions have been secured and utilised in combination with other match funding from sources including National Lottery grants, the Local Transport Plan, landfill tax credit funds and other grant sources, together with investment from Hyndburn Borough Council itself.

Indeed, completion of the National Cycle Network Route 6 which runs through the Borough was achieved in this way. The Huncoat greenway is another example where several phases of high quality access route have been completed, providing an attractive facility serving local communities and improving accessibility from northern Accrington out to open countryside beyond Huncoat. Completion and further progress of this route eastwards to join the canal network is one of the potential opportunities to be secured through housing and employment development in the Huncoat area.

c. Motorway and Trunk Road Improvements (Policy T3)

i. Has the Core Strategy assessed the individual and cumulative impact of the overall scale and pattern of proposed development on the strategic highway network, particularly given the current capacity constraint/congestion of the M65/A56, and how will the impact of particular developments be assessed?

The Highways Agency has been consulted during the various stages of the development of the Core Strategy and no objections have been raised concerning capacity. It is unclear why the question is based upon the premise that there are capacity constraints / congestion on the M65 / A56 except in relation to Whitebirk were the Council and the Highways Agency have been working to resolve issues arising from the proposed development of the strategic site at Whitebirk (Whitebirk 1). The Council recognise the importance of engaging the Highways Agency on proposals within Hyndburn and would wish to be involved in the M65 corridor study that is referred to.

ii. What improvements are likely to be required to the strategic road network as a result of proposed developments in the Core Strategy?

There are a number of parts of the strategic road network that are affected by the Core Strategy, the two main ones being:

- J6 of M65 at Whitebirk
- A56 at its junction with Burnley Road.

J6 of M65 at Whitebirk

The employment site is accessed directly from the large roundabout at J7 of the M65 and when the planning application was submitted the Highways Agency initially directed that not more than 70% of the site should be developed without further work being undertaken to
identify the works needed to improve capacity along the M65. However, since the initial recommendation to grant planning permission for the development (subject to a s.106) capacity improvements have been made to the roundabout at J7 through the installation of traffic lights and re-alignment of some of the highway. These works were paid for by the public sector and were needed to reduce the dangers associated with vehicles queuing on the motorway at peak times.

The Council subsequently re-consulted the Highways Agency (pointing out the improvements that have been undertaken) who have since confirmed that no more than 88% of the site should be developed without the further work being undertaken to identify improvements needed. This is confirmed by the letter from the Highways Agency dated 17th September 2010.

A56 with its junction with Burnley Road

The position with regard to Huncoat, and the proposed access onto the A56 via Burnley Road has also been the subject of scrutiny through the development control process. When considering Huncoat, it is necessary to take into consideration the following:

a. The Hyndburn Local Plan, adopted in 1996, allocated land for a large housing site in the centre of Huncoat and a large area of land for a strategic employment site. Although neither have been developed, both would have required access onto the strategic road network at this point and would have been taken into consideration when the acceptability of the Whinney Hill Link Road and associated development was considered by the Highways Agency.

b. Planning permission has been granted for the development of the Whinney Hill Link Road, an industrial distributor road that would have resulted in a significant volume of traffic accessing the A56 at Burnley Road junction. The Highways Agency was consulted on this planning application.

c. Planning permission has been granted for the development of a waste technology park, although that permission has now lapsed. The Highways Agency was consulted on this planning application.

d. Planning permission was granted for the development of employment uses on the site of the Huncoat Employment Site. The Highways Agency was consulted on this planning application.

The proposals for Huncoat are strongly related to those within the Hyndburn Local Plan and the Highways Agency has been consulted on aspects of these developments, some of which already benefit from having planning permission.

iii. Does the Highways Agency have any outstanding concerns about the impact of the scale and location of proposed development envisaged by the Core Strategy on the strategic road network?

The views of the Highway Agency on the Core Strategy are set out in their letter dated 17th September 2010.
The Council will continue to work with the Highways Agency on the development of sites and allocations that are likely to have an impact on the strategic road network. The Council has welcomed the approach taken by the Highways Agency to Whitebirk and hopes that a similar approach will be taken on Huncoat, recognising that this is likely to be some time away but that a Neighbourhood Plan and Supplementary Planning document will be produced for that area.

The Highways Agency has made a number of recommendations on textural changes that would improve the Core Strategy and the Council are happy to make changes incorporating the text suggested, in particular in relation to paragraph 4.82 suggesting that additional commentary should be added to paragraph 4.82 to emphasise the commitment to managing site selection through to reviewing planning applications. There is an opportunity to reference, consistent with DaSTS, the following approach as adopted by the Agency:

- Selecting sustainable locations as a priority;
- Minimisation of trip generation at source;
- Demand Management; and, only once all alternatives have been exhausted;
- Capacity enhancement.