Note of meeting to discuss representation to Core Strategy  
Monday 8th August 2011

Present:

Katie Dent (KD)  Omega Atlantic Ltd
Alan Parker (AP)  Omega Atlantic Ltd
Stephen Fawcett (SF)  Hawksmoor
Tim Rainbird (TR)  Quod Planning
Joanne Macholc (JM)  Hyndburn BC
Farooq Rafiq (FR)  Hyndburn BC [Present for part of meeting]
Simon Prideaux (SP)  Hyndburn BC [Present for part of meeting]

Points covered

1. JM introduced the purpose of the meeting and the current stage in the examination process. Also mentioned the Schedule of Further Proposed Changes, some of which had relevance for Huncoat and gave an overview of the status of those changes.

2. TR summarised the representations made, stating they were broadly supportive but were seeking some additional flexibility following the CPO decision and the expiry of the Waste Technology Park planning permission. With reference to policy A8, they were seeking to remove or downgrade the reference to the Waste Technology Park due to their understanding that scheme no longer proceeding. JM referred to Lancashire County Council’s (LCC) latest position as set out in M &W Site Allocations and Development Management DPD – Submission version which includes policies for a large scale built waste management facility allocation at Huncoat/Whinney Hill and protection of the route of the road. The Core Strategy reflects these and there is a need for the two plans to be consistent. Agreed that the term Waste Technology Park needs to be amended.

3. TR stated that the main beneficiary of the Whinney Hill Link Road (WHLR) was LCC and the residents currently affected by the environmental impacts of the Whinney Hill Quarry & Landfill site – the references for the funding for the road within the CS should reflect this. JM stated that LCC’s position had also changed following the CPO decision. LCC is no longer funding the construction of WHLR. SP added that the Whinney Hill Quarry and Landfill has permission to operate until 2042 and neither the quarry operators or landfill company were under an obligation to provide or fund a link road. Conversely, there has always been a requirement that the former Huncoat Power Station site would need to be accessed by a new road. SF stated that the quality of the road designed by LCC was of a very high specification including large tracts of landscaping which was reflected in the build cost, a lesser road would be sufficient to access the site.

4. SP confirmed that the development of the site is envisaged in Additional
years 6-10 (phase 2) of the plan period. Junction 7 and Whitebirk are phase 1. Alternative funding possibilities were discussed in respect of Whinney Hill Link Road. CIL was seen to be an option but would take time to generate the funds. SP suggested an equalisation agreement between the main parties where costs would be shared as a proportion of the benefits and also the possibility of bidding for the Regional Growth Fund or through the Local Transport Plan 3.

5. Discussion on the CPO decision and what it concluded in relation to the Whinney Hill Link Road. The Council’s understanding was that the CPO had been confirmed in its entirety for the road but TB stated that only phase 2 confirmed. It was agreed that the Secretary of State’s letter on the CPO for phase 2 was unclear because it referred to the road in its entirety.

KD to seek clarification on the status of the CPO decision.

6. TR stated that there was not enough value in the land to deliver the road which was evidenced by the site not having been developed in the 15 years it has been allocated. Was seeking additional flexibility in the range of uses that are included in policy A8. Stated that the delivery of their site was important for the Borough. The representations to the Revised Publication edition sought the inclusion of the term ‘and or mixed uses’ but the inclusion of ‘enabling or supporting development’ was now seen as more appropriate. Discussion over what end uses were being sought through the inclusion of this terminology. TR suggested higher value commercial development but not necessarily housing given the location. SP highlighted the acknowledged importance of ensuring that Accrington Town Centre would not be harmed by out of centre development but recognised that development that met local needs arising from the new development taking place in Huncoat may be appropriate.

TR to suggest more precise wording to include in Policy A8.

7. Short discussion relating to the railway sidings which were also in Omega Atlantic’s ownership. TR queried whether it was appropriate for the site to remain in the Greenbelt if the site came back into use? SP explained the references to the Railway Sidings in the Core Strategy were derived from the LTP which sought their protection given the few that remain in the North West that could be reused.