

# **Hyndburn Local Plan Site Allocations DPD**

## **Scoping and Site Assessment Methodology**

**February 2018: Consultation Paper 3 of 3**

## Executive Summary

This consultation document sets out the first stages in preparing a Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD). When adopted the DPD will include allocated sites to meet the future development requirements (these requirements are being considered separately as part of the Core Strategy Review) and sites and areas to be protected from development, to 2033.

This document identifies the matters which the Site Allocations DPD will address, these include:

- review of the urban boundary, Green Belt and associated matters;
- identification of land for employment and housing development and land which may be needed for development beyond the plan period (“safeguarded” land);
- retail matters;
- new infrastructure requirements (e.g. new schools, highways etc.); and
- identification of a green infrastructure network.

Some studies have already been undertaken to inform the above matters (e.g. future housing and employment land studies), however further evidence will be produced during 2018 to help support this work.

The document also sets out a proposed methodology for how the Council will assess all sites put forward for consideration for allocation. A four stage process is proposed which will ensure that all sites are assessed in a consistent and transparent way. The stages are: site identification; site screening; detailed assessment; and assessment of sustainability. This last stage will be undertaken independently by the consultants undertaking the Sustainability Appraisal of the DPD.

Further detail is set out of the detailed assessment stage (Stage 3), showing the criteria to be assessed and the sources of data that will be used for the assessment.

No decisions have been made about the final scope of SA DPD policies or about the site assessment methodology. This consultation is a key way in which views on these matters will be gathered so the Council is very keen to receive feedback at this early stage to feed into the process.

Please use the Council’s Response Form to respond to this consultation

**Note:** This paper forms the third of three consultation papers that the Council is seeking views on at this stage. The other papers include the Core Strategy Policies Scoping Assessment (Paper 1) and the Core Strategy Growth Options and Spatial Options (Paper 2)

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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Site Allocations Development Plan Document (Site Allocations DPD) will form the final part of the new Hyndburn Local Plan<sup>1</sup>, and will replace the remaining saved planning policies, and the Proposals Map, from the 1996 Local Plan. This ‘Scoping and Site Assessment Methodology’ consultation paper presents the first stage in the production of this important planning document.
- 1.2 The consultation paper first sets out the key aims of the Council in preparing the Site Allocations DPD, detailing the likely content of the document via a scoping assessment. It then goes on to outline the proposed methodology on which the Council will assess candidate development sites and how it will go about selecting the preferred sites to take forward for allocation in the plan.

### Scoping Assessment

- 1.3 The subject matter of the Site Allocations DPD will be governed by a combination of requirements set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and commitments that the Council has made in previously adopted Development Plan Documents (namely the Core Strategy and the Development Management DPD).
- 1.4 At the simplest level, paragraph 157 of the NPPF states that Local Plans should seek to allocate sites to bring forward land and promote development and infrastructure where necessary. The Core Strategy Review will clarify the context for the quantum and location of development in Hyndburn that the Council will be seeking, as it progresses to a preferred option.
- 1.5 The Council is currently seeking to develop policies in the Site Allocations DPD to cover the following key topics:

#### General

- Review of the **urban boundary** across the Borough, specifically:
  - How to deal with the former Areas of Special Restraint (from the 1996 Local Plan);
  - Resolving any anomalies of Green Belt or Countryside Area misalignment with the urban boundary; and
  - Consideration of urban boundaries to define smaller settlements in the Borough (e.g. Belthorn, Tottleworth, Green Haworth etc.)

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<sup>1</sup> Alongside the Core Strategy, Accrington Area Action Plan, and Development Management DPD

- Identification of suitable **safeguarded sites** for future development needs beyond the plan period; and
- To provide further details as appropriate on the form, scale, access and quantum of development on the **Strategic Allocations** set out in the Core Strategy.

### **Economic**

- Identification of suitable **employment land allocations** to meet the full requirements for employment land identified in the Core Strategy Review;
- Clarification of the location of all the **existing employment areas** in the Borough;
- Clarification of the **retail hierarchy** in Hyndburn, including identification of Local Parades and Neighbourhood Centres and clarification of the status of other commercial locations;
- Review of the **Shopping (town centre) boundaries** for Accrington, Great Harwood, Rishton, Clayton-le-Moors and Oswaldtwistle<sup>2</sup>, and consideration of the need for Primary Shopping Areas in all centres; and
- Identification of the **Primary and Secondary retail frontages** in Great Harwood, Rishton, Clayton-le-Moors and Oswaldtwistle. Review of the Primary and Secondary retail frontages in Accrington

### **Housing**

- Identification of suitable **housing land allocations** to meet the full requirements identified in the Core Strategy Review, including phasing of sites where appropriate; and
- Identification of suitable **gypsy and traveller sites** to meet any identified requirements from the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (to be updated in 2018);

### **Infrastructure**

- Identification and allocation/safeguarding of relevant sites for **new infrastructure** (e.g. new schools, highway improvements, cycle/footpath/bridleway network) where required, evidenced through an infrastructure delivery plan accompanying the Core Strategy Review; and
- Formally identify the **existing green infrastructure (GI) network** (including public open space) to identify all relevant GI typologies, and opportunities for linkages and enhancements.

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<sup>2</sup> Although the Accrington Town Centre boundary was considered more recently than other centres through the Accrington AAP, this will be re-considered as part of the Site Allocations DPD alongside the other centres.

**Other**

- Identify any relevant **local landscapes** to safeguard or enhance including on habitat grounds;
- Identify and allocate **food-growing spaces** and local food networks where appropriate; and
- Identify **wind areas of search**, highlighting potentially suitable areas for wind energy development

**Site Assessment Methodology**

1.6 The allocation of sites in a Site Allocations DPD will be a key part of the emerging Local Plan as it is ultimately new development sites that will facilitate the delivery of the Local Plan’s wider strategic policies and objectives. The Council will be seeking to allocate an appropriate portfolio of sites to ensure that the Site Allocations DPD contributes to sustainability objectives, offering the most benefit to the community whilst minimising any adverse impacts on the environment.

1.7 The Site Allocations DPD will be informed by a robust evidence base much of which has already been completed. The table below summarises the position of the evidence base as of January 2018. The outstanding pieces of evidence base are anticipated to be completed over the next twelve months or so. This will ensure that all the evidence is in place prior to the Council producing its ‘Publication’ version<sup>3</sup> of the Site Allocations DPD.

**Table 1: Evidence base relevant to the Site Allocations DPD**

Evidence	Status
Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)	Completed June 2014. Partial update (new household projections) also completed Dec. 2015
Employment Land Study (ELS)	Completed Jan. 2016
Retail Study	Completed Jun. 2016
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)	Completed Sep. 2016
Plan Viability Study (PVS)	Completed Sep. 2016
Green Belt Review	Commenced – anticipated Feb. 2018
Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment	Not started – expected 2018
Open Space / Green Infrastructure Study	Not started – expected 2018
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)	Not started – expected 2018/19

<sup>3</sup> Under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

Habitat Surveys	Not started – expected 2018/19
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- 1.8 Alongside an assessment of all reasonable site allocation options, to be undertaken in line with the methodology set out in this report, the Council also has a legal duty to ensure that the Site Allocations DPD is prepared alongside a Sustainability Appraisal. A Sustainability Appraisal monitors the impact of the Local Plan’s allocation options, policies and objectives to ensure that they contribute to sustainable development, and must comply with requirements of the European Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive.
- 1.9 Rather than run two separate and potentially overlapping assessment processes then, where relevant, objectives and indicators from the Sustainability Appraisal framework (set out in the Scoping Report 2018, LUC) are proposed to be used in this site assessment methodology; in particular these factors come into the assessment of the suitability of sites as set out in Section 3 (e.g. measures around access to public transport, services, green space etc.).
- 1.10 A significant proportion of the sites considered in the Site Allocations DPD will relate to potential housing allocations. Table 1 details completion of the Council’s Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) in 2016. The SHLAA, at a strategic level, represents an assessment of what could be developed in the Borough and so much of this information will be carried forward into the Site Assessment Methodology detailed here. The Site Allocations DPD should be seen as the mechanism by which the Council determines which sites should be developed, by looking in more detail at a wider variety of factors.
- 1.11 It is essential that site allocation decisions can be fully justified and that they are supported by a clear audit trail. As such, the methodology has been designed to:
- take account of national planning principles;
  - ensure that development takes place in sustainable locations (or ones that can be made sustainable through enabling development);
  - enable very unsuitable sites to be filtered out early on in the assessment process;
  - provide a basis for comparison between sites; and
  - be transparent so that anyone can see how a particular outcome has been arrived at.
- 1.12 The draft methodology is set out fully in Section 3 of this report.

## 2.0 Consultation

2.1 This document represents the first stage of work to be undertaken on the Hyndburn Site Allocations DPD. It forms a part of the ‘preparation’ phase of the plan. The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 sets out the requirements for plan preparation.

2.2 Regulation 18 refers to the first stages of preparing a local plan and is commonly referred to as the “Issues and Options” stage. Whilst some tasks are prescribed, the overall process is not prescribed. Two rounds of public consultation will be undertaken at Regulation 18 stage:

- *Reg.18 (1) consultation* - the draft Site Assessment Methodology (subject of this document) and current list of sites to be considered by the Council. A final ‘Call for Sites’ will run in conjunction with the Reg.18(1) consultation and the Council may also undertake further investigations to identify additional sites to add into the overall pool of sites to assess; and
- *Reg.18 (2) consultation* – following site assessments of the full pool of sites identified, the second consultation exercise under Reg.18 will present the outcomes of the site assessment exercise and also present policy options for allocation / designation of sites.

2.3 Regulation 19 refers to the publication of the proposed submission version of the Site Allocations DPD and related policies which will identify the Council’s preferred option for allocations and related policies. This plan will be made available for formal public consultation.

2.4 In addition to the public consultation exercises, the proposed methodology and list of sites will be sent to a wide range of consultees including:

### **Internal (Hyndburn Borough Council)**

- Allotments
- Corporate Property
- Environmental Health
- Environmental Projects
- Housing
- Parks and Open Spaces
- Planning
- Policy, Partnerships and Performance
- Regeneration

**External - statutory consultees**

- Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
- Burnley Borough Council
- Canal and River Trust
- East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group
- EE
- Electricity Northwest
- Environment Agency
- Highways England
- Historic England
- Homes and Communities Agency
- Lancashire Constabulary
- Lancashire County Council
- Lancashire Enterprise Partnership
- Lancashire Wildlife Trust
- Mercer House 1842 Ltd
- National Grid
- Natural England
- Network Rail
- Parish Councils (covering Hyndburn and neighbouring areas)
- Ribble Valley Borough Council
- Rossendale Borough Council
- The Coal Authority
- Three
- United Utilities
- Vodafone and O2

**External - non-statutory consultees**

- A wide range of non-statutory organisations including community and voluntary organisations, agencies, developers, and planning consultants.

2.5 The Council has a legal duty<sup>4</sup> to engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis with other relevant local authorities (neighbours), Lancashire County Council and other statutory public bodies. The Government refers to this as the ‘duty to cooperate’. The Council will ensure that, prior to submitting the Site Allocations DPD, that it has made every effort to secure co-operation. It will prepare a statement of common ground where appropriate for key issues, setting out relevant cross-boundary matters where agreement has or has not been reached.

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<sup>4</sup> Set out in the Localism Act 2011

## 3.0 Site Assessment: Proposed Methodology

3.1 This part of the report proposes a draft methodology for assessing individual sites that are put forward for allocation for development in the new Local Plan. The Site Allocations DPD will also include sites for protection from development (e.g. Green Belt, Open Space etc.), and a review of established boundaries in some circumstances. Where relevant at this stage, the process by which these will be undertaken is also covered below.

### Site Allocations

3.2 Four key stages of work have been identified that form the proposed Site Assessment Methodology (SAM) for the Hyndburn Site Allocations DPD. These are summarised as:

- Stage 1: Site Identification
- Stage 2: Site Screening
- Stage 3: Detailed Appraisal of sites
- Stage 4: Assessment of Sustainability (undertaken independently)

3.3 Each of the stages is discussed in more detail below. Following this Figure 1 provides an overview of the process in flowchart form.

### Stage 1: Site Identification

3.4 The help ensure that the Council meets the requirements of the NPPF the Site Allocations DPD is required to allocate sufficient sites to promote development and the flexible use of land to meet the full objectively assessed needs for new homes in the Borough. Adequate sites for employment, retail and community uses are also required.

3.5 The Council will gather and identify sites from a wide range of sources to feed into the Site Assessment Methodology and ensure that the very best portfolio of sites is reflected in the final Site Allocations DPD. Stage 1 will gather sites from the following sources:

- The 'Call for Sites' that has been on-going since 2015 and will be closed in 2018
- Planning Policy Evidence Base
  - 2016 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) - sites in categories 1, 2 and 3
  - 2016 Employment Land Study (ELS) - sites recommended for release

- 2016 Retail Study – opportunity site
  - Green Belt Review (to be completed early 2018) – all sites which play a low or moderate contribution to Green Belt purposes may be considered
  - Review of 1996 Local Plan allocations
  - Council Officer recommendations
  - Sites in Hyndburn ownership
  - Sites arising from targeted Land Registry enquiries
- 3.6 Alongside this consultation paper the Council will publish the current pool of sites. A final ‘Call for Sites’ will take place in conjunction with the consultation on this scoping and site assessment methodology report to ensure that as comprehensive a list as possible is taken forward to Stage 2.
- 3.7 Once a comprehensive pool of sites has been collected, the Council will move onto the subsequent stages 2-4 that will look at how suitable, sustainable and deliverable each of the sites are.

## Stage 2: Site Screening

- 3.8 Before sites are assessed in detail initial site screening will be undertaken which will remove sites which are considered unrealistic for consideration for allocation. This is in compliance with the Planning Practice Guidance on Local Plan preparation which makes clear that Local Authorities are required to assess and compare ‘reasonable alternatives’<sup>5</sup> for development sites at an early stage in the plan making process.
- 3.9 Specific factors that will be used to screen out unrealistic sites, and help produce a short-list of candidate sites include:
- **Size** – sites below a minimum size threshold of 0.15ha (typically able to accommodate at least 5 dwellings) will be removed from further consideration in the allocations process. Whilst sites smaller than this will not necessarily prevent development from coming forward on them, if they do so they will be considered to constitute ‘windfall’ sites in the local context, for which a specific allowance will be made in calculating the overall need for allocations in the Borough. The Council believes that the size threshold proposed represents a suitable compromise between ensuring that allocated development opportunities are maximised in the new Local Plan<sup>6</sup>, whilst recognising the limited resources available in plan making.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal>

<sup>6</sup> Acknowledging the Government’s intentions to ensure a larger number of small sites are brought forward through Local Plans

- **Location** – a number of locational factors are considered to present serious constraints to development. Sites will be removed that fall within these categories. These include sites that are:
  - Located within an area of recognised importance for conservation and environmental importance or national constraint<sup>7</sup> (i.e. Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Ancient Woodland, Biological Heritage Site, Local Nature Reserve and Scheduled Ancient Monuments).
  - Not directly connected to the existing urban area (and the intervening land is an unrealistic development parcel) will also be removed in order to prevent inappropriate sporadic development beyond the existing built up areas.
  - If part of a site falls within one of these categories then the Council will consider whether the proportion of the site affected can be removed and whether the remaining net developable area exceeds the minimum size threshold of 0.15ha (or capable of supporting 5 or more dwellings).
- **Availability** – sites that already have full planning permission will be removed as it will be assumed that should permission lapse then permission would be granted again. Where applications only have outline consent, or are pending, these will be carried forward to Stage 2b for their potential for allocation.

3.10 Sites screened-out at this stage will be added to a list of rejected sites setting out the reason(s) for their screening. This list will be made publicly available alongside the Council’s consultation documents for comment at the second stage of consultation to be undertaken at the Regulation 18 stage.

### **Stage 3: Detailed Appraisal**

- 3.11 Once a short-list of candidate sites is produced from Stage 2, a detailed technical appraisal of each candidate site will be undertaken as proposed below.
- 3.12 It is proposed that the **suitability**, **availability** and **achievability** of all sites is assessed to ascertain whether they are appropriate for allocations. These three criteria are used in assessing the availability of land for economic and housing development as stated in government guidance<sup>8</sup> and have been used in the SHLAA. The SHLAA was undertaken at a strategic level in order to provide evidence for the preparation of the plan and there will be some

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<sup>7</sup> Paragraph 17 of the NPPF refers to the need for allocations for development to ‘*prefer land of lesser environmental value*’

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-land-availability-assessment>

duplication of information already gathered on sites assessed in the latest SHLAA. However the site assessment methodology will build on that information to provide a more detailed assessment to identify which sites are most appropriate for allocation and development.

- 3.13 A proposed site assessment methodology framework (see Appendix A) sets out the individual factors to be considered under suitability, availability and achievability. Each factor is listed, along with detail on how the factor will be assessed, the source of information, and any relevant consultees to seek specific comments from. The framework will be used to enable sites to be assessed consistently and for comparisons to be made between sites. The full assessments will be made publically available to ensure transparency in the plan making process.
- 3.14 The **suitability** of sites considers a number of factors which will need to be taken into account. These have been grouped into four key types of factor affecting development and impacts of the development itself. Full details are provided in Appendix A but in summary these cover the following matters:

A. Environmental factors

- Efficient use of land (A.1)
- Current condition of site (A.2)
- Topography (A.3)
- Flood risk (A.4)
- Contaminated land (A.5)
- Soil Quality (A.6)
- Visual impact/landscape character (A.7)
- Landscape character (A.8)
- Heritage assets (A.9)
- Ecological networks (A.10)
- Trees / woodlands / hedgerows (A.11)
- Priority species / habitats (A.12)
- Air quality (A.13)

B. Accessibility factors

- Accessibility by cycling/walking (B.1)
- Accessibility by public transport: bus (B.2)
- Accessibility by public transport: train (B.3)
- Accessibility to the strategic road network (B.4)
- Accessibility to major employment area (B.5)
- Accessibility to town/district centre (B.6)
- Accessibility to primary school (B.7)
- Accessibility to doctors surgery (B.8)

C. Infrastructure factors

- Highways access (C.1)
- Highways capacity (C.2)
- Utilities/services (C.3)
- Drainage (C.4)
- Open space / green infrastructure network (C.5)
- Schools infrastructure (C.6)

D. Other policy factors/constraints

- Coal / mineral workings (D.1)
- Landfill gas (D.2)
- Hazardous installations (D.3)
- Overhead lines (D.4)
- Network Rail (D.5)
- Green Belt contribution (D.6)
- Merging of settlements (D.7)
- Surrounding land uses (D.8)
- Existing employment site (D.9)
- Minerals and Waste allocation (D.10)
- Minerals and Waste safeguarding are (D.11)
- Regeneration (D.12)

3.15 Where adverse impacts are identified in relation to any of the suitability criteria, it is important to identify whether any form of mitigation can be identified and implemented to overcome the impacts. This will identify whether a site can become more suitable for development but an important factor is whether the mitigation measures would impact on the viability of the site; a factor which is considered further below (under achievability). Commentary will be provided where appropriate in response to any of the suitability assessments.

3.16 The assessment of **availability** of a site seeks to determine whether there are any legal or ownership problems that would hinder development. This will be determined in accordance with the following matters:

- ownership (single or multiple);
- willingness of the owner(s) to develop;
- developer interest;
- ownership constraints; and
- past record of delivery of planning permissions where relevant.

3.17 The assessment of **achievability** of sites seeks to determine whether there is a realistic prospect that the site will be developed for the purposes proposed in the plan period. This will be determined according to the following factors:

- Planning status/history;
- The Council’s strategic viability assessment;
- Deliverability (likely timescale of development);
- Availability of public funding;
- Market demand; and
- Level of supply in the local area

At this stage it is proposed to use the Council’s strategic viability assessment only as an indicator of viability (the Economic Viability Study published (2016)). Sites that are taken further in the process may be subject to a more detailed scheme specific residual valuation method of viability assessment. This would include the normal requirements of the development (e.g. provision of access, open space and affordable housing where appropriate, and the need to mitigate any adverse impacts of the proposed development).

3.18 It is important to note that the assessment of sites will invariably involve a degree of professional and subjective judgment as not all matters can be quantified to a precise degree. Therefore it is proposed that the outcomes for each factor at the second stage of screening are recorded using a simple colour coded system with supporting notes where relevant. The proposed colour coding system is as follows:

- Red – negative outcome, development of site would be inappropriate when assessed under this factor, negative outcome cannot be mitigated.
- Orange – negative outcomes identified, which can be mitigated partially.
- Green – no negative outcome identified or any negative impacts can be wholly mitigated.
- Grey – assessment not relevant for the site

3.19 The outcomes for some factors may present a “showstopper” to development e.g. if there are adverse impacts arising from the development of the site which cannot be mitigated or which would render it unviable, whilst in relation to all other factors, the development of the site be suitable, available and achievable. These matters will be taken into account when assessing individual sites overall in relation to the three categories. To be taken forward for further consideration for allocation, the outcomes in terms of all three categories should be favourable. The sites with the most favourable

outcomes are those which will be taken forward for consideration alongside the outcomes of the assessment of sustainability.

- 3.20 Information to undertake the assessments will be taken from a variety of sources and are indicated in the proposed site assessment methodology framework at Appendix A. These include: widely available secondary data sources published by a variety of agencies and public bodies; the Council's own information systems; data provided various evidence base documents including through the Call for Sites exercise (open since 2015); and the Hyndburn SHLAA (2016). Site visits will also be undertaken by officers and further information will also be sought from those who have submitted sites to enable full consideration to be given to them.

#### **Stage 4: Assessment of Sustainability**

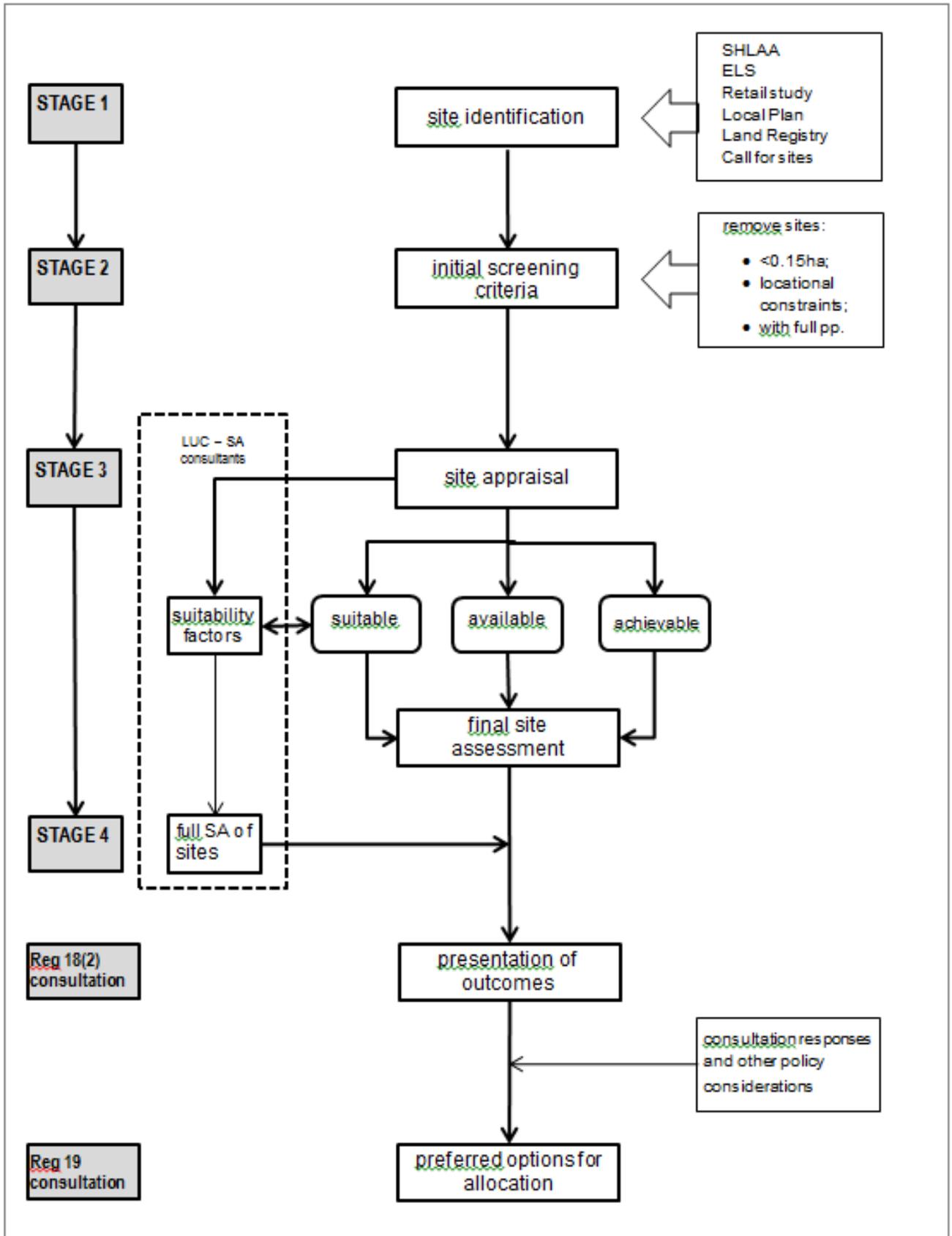
- 3.21 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is a systematic process which is undertaken during the process of plan making. The purpose is to promote sustainable development by assessing how each of the proposals of the emerging plan, when judged against reasonable alternatives, contributes to relevant environmental and sustainability objectives. As well as assessing contribution to sustainable development the process will also be a means of identifying and mitigating any adverse impacts that may arise from the plan. The Council has appointed LUC to independently undertake the SA of the Site Allocations DPD.
- 3.22 The SA scoping report (stage A) has been produced as a draft for consultation with the relevant bodies. When finalised it will be published alongside these consultation documents. It will set out the framework, including objectives and criteria relevant to the Hyndburn context, against which the policies and proposals of the emerging plans, including site options, will be appraised. The findings for each policy and site will be presented as an appendix to the SA Report when it is produced in full. This is a recognised way in which the likely environmental and sustainability effects of the plan and its reasonable alternatives can be identified, assessed and compared.
- 3.23 There will be a degree of overlap between the SA criteria and those referred to in the Council's SAM. To help identify this, the relevant SA objective (where seen to be linked) is highlighted in the framework set out in Appendix A. However, it is important to point out that both the SA and SAM have their own specific purposes, therefore there is much information in both that is unique. For this reason it is important that they are assessed and published separately, and in any case the SA process should be independently

undertaken to ensure it can objectively shape the plan as options are developed and refined.

## **Overall Outcomes**

- 3.24 The outcomes of stages 3 and 4 will be considered together to identify which sites are most suitable for allocation. This will need to be considered further in the light of the amount of development land which is needed and its spatial distribution; matters to be determined as the review of the Core Strategy progresses and a preferred option emerges. In addition, account will also be taken of the level and spatial distribution of existing commitments which will contribute to overall requirements. At this stage, it is not known how much land will be allocated and there is a possibility that the assessment of sites may identify more land than would be needed to meet identified requirements. Therefore favourable outcomes in relation to the site assessment methodology should not be taken to mean that a site will automatically be allocated for development or that planning permission would be forthcoming for a particular site.
- 3.25 Other factors to consider following completion of the SAM on the candidate sites will be broader policy impacts. For example, these could include whether the site is a key growth site (e.g. located in the Government’s Housing Zone at Huncoat), or whether the site is a specific regeneration priority for the Council.

**Figure 1: Flow chart summarising the proposed Site Assessment Methodology (for site allocations)**



## 4.0 Review of Established Boundaries/ Other Designations

- 4.1 The preparation of the Site Allocations DPD will include the review of a number of types of boundaries that were included in the 1996 Hyndburn Local Plan as set out in the following paragraphs and other miscellaneous matters. It will also clarify the designations of other sites for protection from development. This section provides a brief overview of how the Council intends to approach these various aspects of the Site Allocations DPD.
- 4.2 The **urban boundary** was first defined on the Proposals Map accompanying the Hyndburn Local Plan (1996). Specific amendments were made to it as a result of certain policies of the Core Strategy.<sup>9</sup> The Core Strategy envisages that the majority of housing and employment allocations to meet requirements in the plan period will be made within the existing urban boundary. However, depending on the level of future development (discussed in the Growth Options and Spatial Options consultation paper) it may be necessary to consider further adjustments to the urban boundary.
- 4.3 A formal assessment of the **Green Belt** is being undertaken as part of the evidence base to inform the Core Strategy Review and the Site Allocations DPD. Sites which are considered to play a weak or moderate contribution to the purposes of Green Belt may be considered as potential sites for allocation, or as safeguarded sites for beyond the plan period. In any such instance the Council would need to demonstrate exceptional circumstances in line with national policy and that suitable, alternative sites are not available. Any amendment to the Green Belt may therefore involve further changes to the urban boundary as the urban boundary would be redrawn to include any allocated sites.
- 4.4 The delineation of the Green Belt in the 1996 Local Plan also involved the identification of **areas of special restraint**. These were areas located between the urban boundary and the Green Belt. Their designation sought to ensure the permanence of Green Belt boundaries by identifying land which may have been suitable for development beyond the plan period. Although the relevant policy of the Local Plan was not saved, the preparation of the Site Allocations DPD should consider how to deal with these sites<sup>10</sup>. They will therefore be re-considered in accordance with the methodology for the Green Belt review to see what level of contribution they make to Green Belt objectives. Sites that are considered to play a weak or moderate contribution

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<sup>9</sup> policies A5, A7, A8 & RA3 of the Core Strategy.

<sup>10</sup> it is over 20 years since these sites were considered and in a different strategic context

may be considered for possible allocation or as safeguarded sites for beyond this plan period.

- 4.5 The Accrington Area Action Plan identifies a **town centre boundary** and **primary and secondary retail frontages** for Accrington town centre. These form part of the adopted development plan. The Site Allocations DPD will identify detailed boundaries/frontages for the other town centres of Great Harwood and Rishton, the local centres of Clayton le Moors and Oswaldtwistle and district and neighbourhood centres in the Borough where appropriate. Detailed surveys of commercial uses in the Borough were undertaken in 2015/16 and these will be used to inform boundaries/frontages and to confirm the overall retail hierarchy in the Borough.
- 4.6 In addition to the review of boundaries, the Site Allocations DPD will need to identify boundaries of all the **existing employment areas** (particularly business parks and major industrial estates) which are to be retained for employment uses. These are identified in the Core Strategy as:
- Junction 7 Business Park, Clayton le Moors;
  - Petre Road Business Park, Clayton le Moors;
  - Moorfield Industrial Estate, Altham;
  - Huncoat Business Park, Bolton Avenue, Huncoat;
  - Brookside Business Centre, Oswaldtwistle;
  - Heys Lane Business Park, Great Harwood; and
  - Altham Business Park, Altham.
- 4.7 The formal identification of the **green infrastructure network** will also be determined through the Site Allocations DPD. The GI network will be informed by a combination of:
- Existing environmental networks and designations identified in the DM DPD Policy Maps (particularly under Policy DM18: Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Environment);
  - The previous **open space sites** identified in the 1996 Local Plan;
  - The findings/recommendations of the Open Space Study that the Council intends to undertake in 2018, including any proposed new typologies/areas of open space;
  - Water bodies, water courses, wetlands and woodlands;
  - The findings/recommendations of the habitat survey work of potential development sites, planned to be undertaken in 2018/19, and any proposed new **District Wildlife Sites**;
  - The identification of **food growing spaces** (in line with DM DPD Policy DM35: Farm Diversification and Local Food Networks)

- 4.8 The identification of **areas suitable for wind energy development**. In line with the Written Ministerial Statement of 18<sup>th</sup> June 2015 wind areas of search are now required to support wind energy developments of one or more turbines. The council will therefore highlight any potentially suitable areas for wind energy development based on the findings of the latest evidence base (currently the Maslen study of 2011 – Exploring the Potential for Renewable Energy Development in Hyndburn).

# **Appendix A: Proposed Site Assessment Methodology Framework**

**PROPOSED SITE ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY (SAM) FRAMEWORK**

<b>STAGE 1: SITE IDENTIFICATION</b>		
1.1	Site Reference:	
1.2	Site Address/Location:	
1.3	Site Area (gross) (ha) (ref 2.1 below):	
1.4	Site Area (net developable area) (ref. 2.5 below):	
1.5	Proposed use:	
1.6	Indicative Capacity of the site (based on 1.4 above) :	
1.7	Source of site identification	SHLAA / ELR / Call for Sites / Green Belt Review etc.

<b>STAGE 2: SITE SCREENING</b>							
Ref.	Assessment Factor	Purpose of assessment	Source of info	Consultees	Assessment Method	Action	SA Objective/ sub-objective
2.1	Site Area (gross) (ha)	Is the site over 0.15ha or capable of supporting 5 or more dwellings?	GGP (Council GIS system)	-	Yes/No?	If no, site will be excluded	-
2.2	Location: conservation/ environment	Is the site within, or would have direct impact on, any area of recognised importance or conservation and environmental important or national constraint (SSSI, Ancient Woodland, BHS, LNR, SAM)?	GGP (Council GIS system)	Natural England, Historic England, Local Nature Partnership	Yes (all) / Yes (in part) / No?	If yes (all or in part) exclude the relevant proportion of the site affected (whole or part) If not affected, in whole or part, continue to 2.3	11.1 and 16.1
2.3	Location: urban area	Is the site well related to the urban area?	GGP (Council GIS system)	-	Site is within or adjacent to urban boundary?	If yes, continue to 2.4	-
					Site separate from urban boundary <100m?	If yes, continue to 2.4 but consider in conjunction with outcomes of Green Belt Review (where relevant)	-

					Site separate from urban boundary >100m?	If yes, site will be excluded	-
2.4	Planning status	Does the site already have full planning permission for development?	HBC Planning Register	-	Yes (all) / Yes (in part) / No?	If no, continue to 2.5 If yes (all or in part) exclude the relevant proportion of the site affected	-
25	Site Area (net developable area) (ha)	Is the remaining area of the site over 0.15ha or capable of supporting 5 or more dwellings	GGP (Council GIS system)	-	Yes/No	If no, site will be excluded	-

### STAGE 3: DETAILED APPRAISAL

Ref.	Assessment Factor	Purpose of assessment	Source of info	Consultees	Assessment Method	Action	SA Objective /sub-objective
<b>3A - SUITABILITY – ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS</b>							
3A.1	Efficient use of land	Can the site be considered as previously developed land?	Contaminated land data and site visit / visual survey	-	Entire site (or >50%) is classed as previously developed land		20.2
					Entire site (or >50%) of the site is classed as greenfield land		
3A.2	Current condition of site	What is the current occupancy status and building status on the site	Site visit / visual survey	-	Site is currently undeveloped or cleared		20.1
					Site has buildings on currently derelict/ unoccupied land		
					Site currently developed and occupied (no evidence provided as to when site will be made available)		
3A.3	Topography	Are there topographical constraints on the site?	Site visit / visual survey	HBC Engineer	Site topography not a constraint		-
					Site topography limits developable area		
					Site topography prevents		

STAGE 3: DETAILED APPRAISAL							
Ref.	Assessment Factor	Purpose of assessment	Source of info	Consultees	Assessment Method	Action	SA Objective /sub-objective
					development		
3A.4	Flood Risk	Is the development for a use considered appropriate in relation to the flood zone in which it is located, as defined in the Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification	Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning	Environment Agency, Lead Local Flood Authority	Yes, development is appropriate		15.1
					No, the exception test is required		
					No, development should not be permitted.		
3A.5	Contaminated land	Is the site potentially constrained by contamination, and if so to what extent?	GGP (Council GIS system)	HBC Contaminated Land Officer, Environment Agency	No, or; Yes – contamination known and remediation requirements viable		20.1
					Yes – details of contamination and/or remediation requirements unknown		
					Yes, remediation requirements assumed unviable		
3A.6	Soil quality	Would development of the site result in the loss of agricultural land of high quality?	GGP (Council GIS system)	-	No – site located in urban area or ungraded agricultural land		20.2
					No – site located in Grade 4 or 5 agricultural land		
					Yes – site located in Grade 3 agricultural land		
3A.7	Visual impact/ landscape character	How visible is the site in the landscape from public vantage points (roads, railways, public RoW etc.)?	Site visit / visual survey	-	Not visible / site well screened		17.1
					Visible in distant views / some degree of screening		
					Highly visible, no screening		

**STAGE 3: DETAILED APPRAISAL**

Ref.	Assessment Factor	Purpose of assessment	Source of info	Consultees	Assessment Method	Action	SA Objective /sub-objective
3A.8	Landscape Character	Is the development compatible with the landscape character type in which it sits?	Site visit / visual survey  LCC LCA & South Pennines LCA (where appropriate)  LCC Landscape and Heritage SPG  National Character Area Profiles	Natural England	Yes, relevant landscape strategy would support development		17.1
					Yes however relevant landscape strategy would restrict form/type of development		
					No, relevant landscape strategy would not support development of site		
3A.9	Heritage Assets	Would development of the site be likely to result in any harm to the significance of heritage assets, setting or wider historic environment?	HBC Conservation Officer	HBC Conservation Officer, Historic England	No, site not located in or adjacent to any heritage assets or their setting		11
					Yes site development may harm the significance of a heritage asset however mitigation will be possible		
					Yes site development will harm the significance of a heritage asset and mitigation not possible		
3A.10	Ecological networks	Would development of the site be likely to result in any adverse impacts for an identified ecological network?	GGP (Council GIS system)	LERN	No, site not located in or adjacent to an identified network		16
					Yes but mitigation may be possible		
					Yes and mitigation not possible		
3A.11	Trees / woodlands /	Would development of the site be likely to result in significant	GGP (Council GIS	HBC Trees/ Woodlands	No, or minimal, coverage on site and/or development could easily		16

**STAGE 3: DETAILED APPRAISAL**

Ref.	Assessment Factor	Purpose of assessment	Source of info	Consultees	Assessment Method	Action	SA Objective /sub-objective
	hedgerows	trees/woodlands or hedgerows being lost or adversely affected?	system), Site visit / visual survey	Officer	retain provision on site with no adverse impacts		
					Yes, however adequate mitigation could take place		
					Yes but adequate mitigation not possible (e.g. extensive TPOs on site/close by)		
3A.12	Priority species/habitats	Would development of the site be likely to impact on priority habitats or species?	Habitat Surveys, Magic Maps (Defra), LERN iRecord database	LERN, Lancashire Wildlife Trust, HBC Ecologist	No, site not located in or adjacent to priority habitat/species		16
					Yes however adequate mitigation could take place		
					Yes but adequate mitigation not possible		
3A.13	Air Quality	Is the site affected by poor air quality (either identified through local monitoring, the National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory LSOA data, or AQMA)?	HBC Monitoring	HBC Air Quality Officer, Environment Agency	No		19
					Yes however adequate mitigation would allow development		
					Yes but adequate mitigation not possible		
3A.14	Amenity issues (Noise/Odour)	Is the site potentially constrained by an amenity related issue such as noise/odour from other nearby uses	-	HBC Environmental Health	No		19
					Yes, however adequate mitigation could take place		
					Yes but adequate mitigation not possible		
<b>3B - SUITABILITY – ACCESSIBILITY FACTORS</b>							
3B.1	Accessibility by Cycling/Walking	Does the site provide an opportunity to enhance the cycle, footpath or bridleway	GGP (Council GIS system)	-	Development located on existing network		8.3
					Development could provide		

**STAGE 3: DETAILED APPRAISAL**

Ref.	Assessment Factor	Purpose of assessment	Source of info	Consultees	Assessment Method	Action	SA Objective /sub-objective
		network in the Borough?			opportunities to improve connectivity of existing network		
					Site unrelated to existing networks		
3B.2	Accessibility by Public Transport: bus	Does the site provide easy access on foot to public transport: bus stop with regular service (defined as minimum of every 15 minutes during the day, Monday to Saturday)	LCC MARIO	-	Yes, within 400m (5 min) of regular service		8.3
					Yes, between 400m and 800m (5-10mins) of regular service <b>or</b> within 400m but services are less than regular.		
					No, greater than 800m (>10mins) <b>or</b> between 400 and 800m but services are less than regular		
3B.3	Accessibility by Public Transport: train	Does the site provide easy access on foot to public transport: train station	GGP (Council GIS system)	-	Yes, site is within 800m of Accrington rail station		8.3
					Yes, site is within 800m of other train station		
					No, >800m from any train station		
3B.4	Accessibility to the strategic road network	Does the site have good links to the strategic road network?	GGP (Council GIS system)	-	<1km (by road)		-
					Between 1km and 3km (by road)		
					>3km (by road)		
3B.5	Accessibility to major employment area	Does the site provide easy access on foot to a significant employment area (business parks or major industrial estates as set out in Core Strategy E2)?	GGP (Council GIS system)	-	Yes, within 800m (10 min walk)		1.2
					Yes, between 800m and 1600m (10-20 min)		
					No, greater than 1600m		

**STAGE 3: DETAILED APPRAISAL**

Ref.	Assessment Factor	Purpose of assessment	Source of info	Consultees	Assessment Method	Action	SA Objective /sub-objective
3B.6	Accessibility to town/district centre	Does the site provide easy access on foot to a town centre or local centre?	GGP (Council GIS system)	-	Yes, within 800m (10 min walk)	Green	10.3
					Yes, between 800m and 1600m (10-20 min)	Yellow	
					No, greater than 1600m	Red	
3B.7	Accessibility to primary school	Does the site provide easy access on foot to a primary school?	GGP (Council GIS system)	-	Yes, within 800m (10 min walk)	Green	8.1
					Yes, between 800m and 1600m (10-20 min)	Yellow	
					No, greater than 1600m	Red	
3B.8	Accessibility to doctors surgery	Does the site provide easy access on foot to a GP/doctors surgery?	GGP (Council GIS system)	-	Yes, within 800m (10 min walk)	Green	4.2
					Yes, between 800m and 1600m (10-20 min)	Yellow	
					No, greater than 1600m	Red	
<b>3C - SUITABILITY – INFRASTRUCTURE FACTORS</b>							
3C.1	Highways Access	Can adequate access be provided onto the site	LCC Highways	LCC Highways	Safe/adequate access can be provided to the existing highway	Green	-
					Safe/adequate access requires 3rd party land or additional investment	Yellow	
					Safe and adequate access not possible	Red	
3C.2	Highways Capacity	Is the capacity of the local road network constrained in the immediate vicinity or close by?	Transport study (to be commissione	-	No, or yes but minor	Green	
					Yes, but can be mitigated with S106	Yellow	

**STAGE 3: DETAILED APPRAISAL**

Ref.	Assessment Factor	Purpose of assessment	Source of info	Consultees	Assessment Method	Action	SA Objective /sub-objective
			d)				
					Yes, significant improvements required unlikely to be delivered		
3C.3	Utilities/ services	Availability of key utilities/services infrastructure	Call for Sites	Utilities providers, HBC Engineer	Connecting services available		-
					Potential capacity constraints or new infrastructure required		
					No realistic potential for connection to site		
3C.4	Drainage	Are there any potential constraints/requirements relating to drainage on the site?	SFRA	Environment Agency	No		
					Yes but mitigation possible (e.g. culverted watercourse, SUDS feature)		
					Yes, mitigation not possible/viable		
3C.5	Open Space / GI network	Would development of the site be likely to result in the loss of designated open space or GI Network?	GGP (Council GIS system)	-	No		16
					Yes, partial loss but off-site replacement or on site enhancement possible		
					Yes, total loss and/or off-site replacement not possible		
3C.6	Schools Infrastructure	Can education needs generated by the development be accommodated	LCC	LCC School Planning	Yes, adequate places already in the area		3
					No, but contributions can be sought to mitigate infrastructure deficit		
					No, mitigation not possible		

**STAGE 3: DETAILED APPRAISAL**

Ref.	Assessment Factor	Purpose of assessment	Source of info	Consultees	Assessment Method	Action	SA Objective /sub-objective
<b>3D - SUITABILITY – OTHER POLICY FACTORS/CONSTRAINTS</b>							
3D.1	Coal/Mineral workings	Is the site influenced by former coal mining activities?	GGP (Council GIS system)	Coal Authority,	No or consultee indicates no mitigation required		-
					Yes, consultee comments indicate that mitigation measures required		
					Yes, and mitigation not possible		
3D.2	Landfill gas	Is the site potentially constrained by landfill gas?	GGP (Council GIS system)	HBC Environmental Health	No		-
					Yes, located within former site or 250m buffer zone of former landfill site and mitigation possible		
					Yes, located on a former landfill site and mitigation not possible		
3D.3	Hazardous installations	Is the site potentially constrained by high pressure gas pipelines or other hazardous installations?	GGP (Council GIS system)	HSE	No		-
					Yes, located within buffer zone, mitigation possible		
					Yes, located directly on a hazardous installation or within buffer zone and mitigation not possible		
3D.4	Overhead lines	Is the site constrained by overhead power lines	GGP (Council GIS system)	-	No		-
					Yes, but mitigation possible through scheme design		
					Yes, mitigation not possible		
3D.5	Network Rail	Is the site constrained by Network Rail assets?	GGP (Council GIS)	Network Rail	No		-

STAGE 3: DETAILED APPRAISAL							
Ref.	Assessment Factor	Purpose of assessment	Source of info	Consultees	Assessment Method	Action	SA Objective /sub-objective
			system)		Yes, consultee comments indicate that mitigation measures possible		
					Yes, mitigation not possible		
3D.6	Green Belt contribution	Would development of the site result in the loss of Green Belt land?	GGP (Council GIS system)	-	No		
					Yes, loss of land that plays a weak/moderate contribution to Green Belt		
					Yes, loss of land that plays a strong contribution to Green Belt		
3D.7	Merging of settlements	Would development of the site contribute to the merging (coalescence) of settlements, visual or actual?	Green Belt Assessment	-	No		
					Yes but significant visual gap is retained ,or marginal impact only		
					Yes, will significantly reduce the size and/or visual gap		
3D.8	Surrounding land uses	Is the proposed development likely to be compatible with surrounding land uses?	Site visit / visual survey	-	Yes		19
					No, however adequate mitigation likely to be possible		
					No, mitigation not possible or would have limited impact		
3D.9	Existing employment site	Would the development lead to the loss of an identified existing employment site?	GGP (Council GIS system)	-	No		2.1
					Yes, rated poor or adequate quality		
					Yes, rated good quality		

**STAGE 3: DETAILED APPRAISAL**

Ref.	Assessment Factor	Purpose of assessment	Source of info	Consultees	Assessment Method	Action	SA Objective /sub-objective
3D.10	Minerals and Waste Allocated Site	Is the site allocated for any purpose in the Lancashire Minerals and Waste Plan?	LCC	LCC M&W Team	No		
					Yes but development may be mitigated to make compatible with allocation		
					Yes, development incompatible with allocation		
3D.11	Minerals & Waste Safeguarding Area	Is the site located in the LCC Minerals and Waste Safeguarding Area	LCC	LCC M&W Team	No		
					Yes but consultee happy that proposal is acceptable		
					Yes, consultee unhappy with proposal		
3D.12	Regeneration	Would the site make a positive contribution to the Council's regeneration objectives	GGP (Council GIS system)	-	Yes, located in an area of regeneration or SPD		
					No		

**3E - AVAILABILITY**

3E.1	Ownership	Is the number and identity of all freehold owners known?	Call for Sites Land Registry	Applicants/ Owners	Yes – 1 owner		-
					Yes – multiple willing land owners		
					No/Unknown		
3E.2	Willingness to develop	Have all relevant owners confirmed willingness to develop?	Call for Sites	Applicants/ Owners	Yes		-
					Yes with conditions		
					No, one or more owners unwilling		

**STAGE 3: DETAILED APPRAISAL**

Ref.	Assessment Factor	Purpose of assessment	Source of info	Consultees	Assessment Method	Action	SA Objective /sub-objective
3E.3	Developer interest	Is the land owned by a developer known to undertake development, or has the owner provided evidence of developer interest in the site?	Call for Sites	Applicants/ Owners	Yes		-
					Part owned by developer, or claim made of developer interest but insufficient evidence provided		
					No		
3E.4	Ownership constraints	Are there any land ownership constraints that may restrict development of the site, e.g. ransom strip, restrictive covenants, leases etc.	Call for Sites, Land Registry	Applicants/ Owners	No		-
					Yes but constraints may be mitigated		
					Yes, and no clear evidence that constraints can be mitigated		
3E.5	Delivery record of planning permissions	Where applicant/owner has received previous planning permissions, have these been completed?	Planning Register	-	Yes		-
					In part		
					No		
<b>3F - ACHIEVABILITY</b>							
3F.1	Planning status/ history	What is the planning status and/or history of planning permissions on the site	Planning Register	-	Yes, initial planning permission currently active for the proposed use		
					Planning permission for proposed use has been lapsed or granted on re-application		
					Permission for proposed use has never been granted or has been refused		

**STAGE 3: DETAILED APPRAISAL**

Ref.	Assessment Factor	Purpose of assessment	Source of info	Consultees	Assessment Method	Action	SA Objective /sub-objective
3F.2	Strategic viability assessment	What conclusions does the Economic Viability Study make in relation to the proposed type and scale of development?	Economic Viability Study	Viability Consultants	Proposed use is viable		
					Marginal viability		
					Proposed use is unviable		
3F.3	Deliverability	What is the likely timescale in which the site could be developed	Call for Sites	-	First 5 years, or years 5-10		
					Years 10-15		
					Years 15+ - beyond the Plan timeframe		
3F.4	Public funding	Is there sufficient public funding committed to overcome any infrastructure or on-site constraints, to make the proposed use viable?	Infrastructure Providers, Homes England	Infrastructure Providers, Homes England	Yes		
					Don't know		
					No		
3F.5	Market Demand	What is the strength of market demand in the area for the proposed development	SHLAA, ELS	-	Strong / very strong		
					Moderate		
					Weak / very weak		
3F.6	Level of supply in local area	What is the supply of comparable sites in the local area, including others being considered in the Site Allocations DPD?	Short list of sites	-	Shortage, in high demand		
					Sufficient, enough sites to meet likely demand		
					Abundant, too many sites to meet		

**STAGE 3: DETAILED APPRAISAL**

Ref.	Assessment Factor	Purpose of assessment	Source of info	Consultees	Assessment Method	Action	SA Objective /sub-objective
					likely demand		