



Local Plan to 2040

Statement of Common Ground with Lancashire County Council School Planning Team

(July 2025)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document is a Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) and is required to support the preparation of Hyndburn Borough Council's (HBC) Local Plan 2040 which contains updated strategic policies and site allocations (but not Development Management policies). The SoCG has been prepared to meet the requirements set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023.
- 1.2 This statement is one of several background and technical documents that have been prepared in order to inform and support the preparation of the Hyndburn Local Plan. It specifically addresses the requirements set out in the Localism Act (2011), Section 33A (Part 2) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) for Local Plans to be prepared in a manner that meets the duty to cooperate.
- 1.3 This SoCG outlines the processes of constructive, active, and ongoing engagement between HBC and the Lancashire County Council (LCC) School Planning Team during the preparation of the Local Plan.
- 1.4 The overall purpose of this statement is to:
 - Demonstrate that appropriate processes for cooperation have been established and followed (i.e. engagement arrangements);
 - Detail the constructive, active and ongoing engagement with Lancashire County Council School Planning Team has taken place;
 - Identify the key strategic matters addressed and how the Council has cooperated to maximise the effectiveness of the Local Plan in the context of cross-boundary issues;
 - Record where agreements have been reached on key strategic matters
- 1.5 This SoCG is a written record of the progress made during the process of planning for education in Hyndburn Borough involving Lancashire County Council School Planning Team.
- 1.6 The Council has also worked with the other bodies on strategic matters of relevance and have prepared separate Statements of Common Ground.

2. Education Provision and Contributions Arising from Proposed Growth

2.1 The parties have agreed that:

2.2 The proposed housing growth in the Hyndburn Local Plan 2040 will require a corresponding increase in school capacity.

2.3 Primary school place planning can be addressed through developer contributions (Policy SP3: Planning Obligations), guided by Lancashire's Education Contribution Methodology. This could involve the expansion of existing schools or, where necessary, the provision of new school infrastructure. A distinct approach may be adopted for the Huncoat Garden Village (HGV) proposals.

2.4 Secondary school provision is expected to be accommodated through the expansion of existing schools.

2.5 LCC School Planning Team uses four Primary Planning Areas (PPAs) within Hyndburn for primary education planning. Secondary planning is undertaken on a borough-wide basis. LCC has assessed pupil yield based on proposed dwelling numbers in each area, assuming all units are four-bedroom homes (as per their Regulation 19(2) response dated 11 March 2024):

Planning Area	Dwellings	Primary Pupil Yield 0.38	Secondary Pupil Yield 0.15
Accrington	1729	657	260
Oswaldtwistle	301	114	45
Clayton-le-Moors	173	66	26
Great Harwood and Rishton	288	110	44
Total	2491	947	375

2.6 The parties have subsequently agreed that a more accurate pupil yield should be calculated based on the housing mix defined in Policy SP11, which seeks to deliver:

- 0-5% 1-bed;
- 40-45% 2-bed;

- 35-40% 3-bed and;
- 15-20% 4-bed.

2.7 Using an indicative mix of 40% 2-bed, 40% 3-bed, and 20% 4-bed homes, revised projections for school place requirements are provided below with a detailed breakdown in in Table 1.

Planning Area	Dwellings	Primary Pupil Yield 0.38	Secondary Pupil Yield 0.15
Accrington	1729	292	136
Oswaldtwistle	301	52	25
Clayton-le-Moors	173	31	16
Great Harwood and Rishton	288	50	24
Total	2491	425	201

2.8 Aside from Huncoat Garden Village, no capacity issues have been identified across the borough's primary and secondary schools as a result of proposed development.

2.9 **The parties disagree on:**

The proposed delivery of primary school place provision to mitigate the Huncoat Garden Village impact.

2.10 LCC's Reg 19(1) and 19(2) responses identify a requirement for 1.5 forms of entry (FTE) at Huncoat, aligning with earlier advice issued during preparation of the HGV Masterplan Framework.

2.11 The discussions with the LCC School Planning Team up until the submission of the Local Plan are set out in document HBC1.007j and this includes an agreement on required pupil provision based on the housing mix set out in the submission Local Plan (as set out above).

2.12 There is an agreement that the primary provision requirement for HGV is 254 places which would require 1.2 FE. The Council acknowledges that, given that schools are not typically expanded to half form entries that any additional infrastructure that would impact on the existing education provision would either need to be attributed across the wider pupil planning area to provide the 1.5 FE shortfall required to mitigate the impact of this development and or if retained

within the specific Huncoat location that, the Huncoat Academy would be expanded by a further 2 FE. Any new school place provision delivered within the area will adhere to statutory procedures which include consultation with all key stakeholders.

HBC Position:

2.13 HBC believes the required provision can be met by expanding the existing Huncoat Primary School (currently a 1 FTE school). The school's academy trust has expressed willingness to expand to 3 FTE, as shown in their correspondence:

“Following on from today’s meeting I would like to tell you where LET Education Trust stands in terms of the matters for discussion.

Currently we are open-minded over whether the school is expanded to a two or three form entry. We are absolutely against a 1.5 or 2.5 form entry as this has a huge impact on the delivery of the curriculum for the pupils affected. Mixed year groups following different curricula are extremely difficult to teach and often lead to gaps in learning. Smaller classes within the 1.5 or 2.5 intake within a year group are not cost effective and for this reason would not be considered.

From our earliest discussions, our belief was that the existing site would be expanded on to the school playing fields, the Borough Council would give the school the playing fields that they own next to the school in return and we are still supportive of this. Huncoat is a village school and the traditional frontage with a new development behind will provide a recognisable landmark in the village. We have also recently invested considerable funds in the school replacing the boilers and full heating system and fully replacing and upgrading the nursery and reception teaching areas. This has taken place alongside the expansion of the nursery. We are not closed to the idea of a new-build school but it needs to make economic sense if this is the route to be followed and we would want full involvement in the planning and design of a new school.”

2.14 HBC are also of the position that developing a new school adjacent to the current Huncoat Primary School would not be ideal considering the catchments of the schools, cost and inefficiencies in local service delivery.

2.15 The HGV Masterplan Framework includes concept design and feasibility studies for expanding Huncoat Primary School, with £7.3 million earmarked via Section 106 contributions to support delivery, which was approved by Council.

2.16 Furthermore, in the wider Accrington PPA area in which Huncoat Primary School is located there is an expected requirement for 292 pupils which equates

to 1.4FTE. Current evidence shows that the 5-year position in the Accrington PPA is showing a surplus of 764 pupil places. It is believed that even in a scenario that Huncoat Primary School could not expand up to a 3FTE, there would be primary school spaces available across the wider Accrington PPA.

2.17 The Council considers that there is both opportunities to expand the current Huncoat Primary School and also use the surplus spaces in the wider Accrington PPA to meet the needs arising from the proposed Local Plan development and therefore a new school would not be required at this time.

LCC Position:

2.18 LCC's preference is for flexibility in policy wording to allow for a new school option and also flexibility in the expansion of other existing schools within the Accrington PPA. This reflects the Department for Education's guidance (para. 47), which advises:


"We recommend that you identify a preferred and 'contingency' school expansion project in a planning obligation, or list all schools in the pupil planning area, if any of the identified options would address the needs from development and comply with the Section 106 tests. This will help you respond to changing circumstances and new information, such as detailed feasibility work leading you to abandon a preferred expansion project."

2.19 LCC identify that the HBC position on the availability of pupil spaces in the Accrington PPA is based on a 5-year forecast. This plan substantially exceeds the five-year position and therefore is only an indication in time and cannot discount future forecast changes therefore there should be flexibility within the policy to accommodate for this.


2.20 LCC have also requested that the s106 considers wider expansion options in line with their revised Education Methodology. This seeks to use funding secured across a range of schools to ensure local need is met by the impact of local development.

3. Conclusion

3.1 HBC and LCC School Planning Team agree on the majority of education-related matters arising from the Local Plan. While a difference of opinion remains on the method of delivering primary school capacity to mitigate the impact of Huncoat Garden Village, both parties recognise the need for flexibility, contingency planning, and continued collaboration throughout the plan period and delivery stages.

Signed	
Name	Martyn Ball
Job title	Area Lead- East Lancashire
Date	17th July 2025

Signed	
Name	Paula Durrant
Job title	School Place Planning Manager
Date	17th July 2025

Signed	
Name	Adam Birkett
Job title	Head of Planning and Transportation, HBC
Date	17th July 2025

Statement of Common Ground

Table 1: Pupil Yields based on housing mix contained at Policy SP11

Planning Area	Proposed Dwellings	Primary				Secondary				
		2 bed	3 bed	4+bed	Total	2 bed	3 bed	4+ bed	Total	
Accrington	1729	49	111	132	292	21	63	52	136	
Oswaldtwistle	301	9	20	23	52	4	11	10	25	
Clayton-Le-Moors	173	5	12	14	31	3	7	6	16	
GH & Rishton	288	9	19	22	50	4	11	9	24	
Total	2491					425				201