

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: 7 NOVEMBER 2013
title: PRESTON LOCAL PLAN 2012-2026 PUBLICATION VERSION
submitted by: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
principal author: JOANNE MACHOLC

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To consider the Preston Local Plan Publication Version and its implications for this Council's Core Strategy and determine an appropriate response.
- 1.2 The Preston Local Plan is not directly relevant to this Council's ambitions and priorities but does relate to the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and impact upon Longridge.
 - Council Ambitions - To protect and enhance the existing Environmental Quality of our area.
 - Community Objectives – To support the well being of our service centres and protect the viability and vitality of our market towns.
 - Corporate Priorities - To progress the preparation of the Core Strategy
 - Other Considerations - None

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Preston Local Plan (PLP) was issued for consultation in September 2013. It comprises the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD. It represents an advanced stage in the plan preparation process, preceding submission to the Secretary of State for Examination. The Central Lancashire Core Strategy prepared jointly by Preston CC, Chorley and South Ribble councils and adopted by Preston City Council in July 2012 provides the strategic planning policy context.
- 2.2 The views of Ribble Valley BC are sought as part of the consultation, which closes on Monday, 25 November.
- 2.3 The two councils have undertaken due co-operation in preparing their respective plans through officer and member meetings, on-going discussion and dialogue. Of key relevance have been cross boundary issues at Longridge that are recognised in both Core Strategies.

3 ISSUES

- 3.1 The Ribble Valley Core Strategy specifically considers the impacts of development within the Preston City Council area on its spatial distribution for housing. It takes account of 200 dwellings that may be delivered within the Preston part of Longridge. These are deducted from the requirement for Longridge and redistributed to "other

settlements” in Ribble Valley. The figure of 200 has been derived from ongoing discussions with Preston CC in the evolution of both plans and recognises the potential of a site at Land off Whittingham Road (roughly relating to land adjacent to the Borough boundary, north of Whittingham Road, east of Halfpenny Lane) to accommodate residential development. A site of nearly 19 hectares was shown in the Preferred Options version of the PLP (May 2012) to accommodate 280 dwellings. This Council made no representations at that stage, given that the allocation was consistent with its own Core Strategy. The plan extracts at Appendix 1 attached to this report illustrate the changes between Preferred options and the Publication version.

- 3.2 The position in the Publication Version of the PLP, now subject of consultation has changed; the area of land allocated for residential development under policy HS1 (site HS1.14) has been substantially reduced to 90 dwellings relating to the area of previously developed land. The remainder of the site is now allocated as “Area of Separation” under policy ENV4. The reduction does not appear to be in relation to the identification of insurmountable constraints, although it is acknowledged that infrastructure matters need to be addressed. Instead, The Statement of Consultation accompanying the PLP states that, “Nevertheless, given the strength of local feeling the Council considers that the proposed allocation would have an unacceptable impact on the character of this part of Whittingham”.
- 3.3 The principle of Areas of Separation is established in the adopted Central Lancashire Core Strategy but only defined in relation to specific boundaries on the PLP Proposals Map. It appears to be a tool in maintaining openness and preventing settlements merging. The Statement of Consultation states that in relation to this site “This is to safeguard the character of this part of Whittingham”.
- 3.4 The concerns of this Council are the impacts on its own Core Strategy that has reached the advanced stage of Examination and whether Preston’s Publication Plan reflects the role of Longridge as a Key Service Centre; which is recognised in the Core Strategies of both authorities.
- 3.5 The impact on the RVCS of reducing the residential allocation on the Whittingham Lane site would be that the “Longridge adjustment” in the spatial distribution of housing would have to be reconsidered. Officers of PCC have kept this Council aware of the issues relating to the specific allocation and have recently objected to the Proposed Main Changes of the RVCS and suggest that the Longridge adjustment should be reduced to 100. This will be a matter for consideration by the inspector at the RVCS examination sessions. If the Longridge adjustment is reduced to 100 this would have implications in respect of increasing the residual requirement for Longridge by 100 and reducing the amount to be redistributed to “other settlements”. Without being able to fully consider these implications, the Council would not wish to make further changes at this late stage. It is also considered that in allocating 90 dwellings within its boundary and restricting development to a previously developed site, the PLP fails to recognise the importance of Longridge and the significant contribution the site offers to the role of Longridge as a Key Service centre. Members may recall the response to our own consultations in preparing the Core Strategy that highlighted the views of public about the relationship of this area of land to Longridge.
- 3.6 The application of Area of Separation, Policy ENV4 to this site is questioned. It appears to be used in this context to maintain openness in terms of preventing development rather than protecting a small area of open countryside between neighbouring settlements.

- 3.7 On the basis of the above, it is considered that objection to the PLP should be made.
- 3.8 Officers of the two Councils are due to meet in the week commencing 28th October to discuss the matter and any outcomes will be reported verbally to the meeting.
- 3.9 The deadline for making comments on the PLP is Monday 25th November 2013.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications

- Resources - There is provision within existing resources to work with neighbouring authorities in preparing and responding to emerging Development Plan Documents.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal - In forming a decision, members will need to ensure that its considerations are justified and in accordance with current guidance. The Councils continue to co-operate in preparing their plans.
- Political - There is significant interest in planning policy in Longridge particularly housing matters in relation to the RVCS. The Council also recognises that similar issues will arise within the Preston CC area in relation to the PLP.
- Reputation – The decision taken will have an impact on issues of significance in the local community.
- Equality & Diversity – there are no specific impacts

5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

5.1 That the Council submit an objection to the housing allocation and Area of Separation on land at Whittingham Road Longridge due to its impacts on the Ribble Valley Core Strategy, namely: the spatial distribution of housing; and its relation to the role of Longridge as a Key Service Centre. The precise form of wording is to be delegated to the Head of Planning Services in consultation with the Chairman, to take account of any issues which may arise from the meeting between officers of both Councils in the week commencing 28 October 2013.

JOANNE MACHOLC
SENIOR PLANNING OFFICER

JOHN HEAP
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Preston Local Plan 2012 – 2026 Publication version (July 2013), Preferred Options (May 2012) and associated supporting documents. Available at <http://www.preston.gov.uk/yourservices/planning/planning-policies/local-development-framework/publication-local-plan>

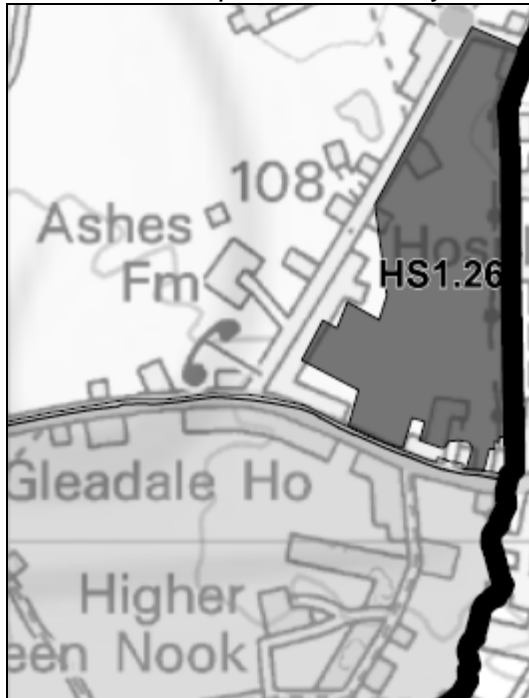
Ribble Valley Core Strategy Submission Version and Proposed Main Changes August 2013. Available via the Core Strategy Examination Web page: http://www.ribbonvalley.gov.uk/info/200283/core_strategy/1428/core_strategy/4

For further information please ask for Joanne Macholc, extension 3200.

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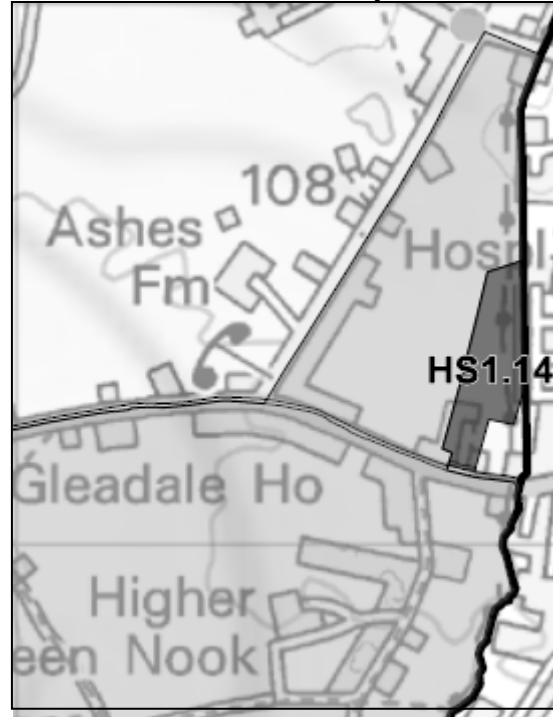
Extracts from Preston Local Plan in relation to Land off Whittingham Road

1. Preferred Options Plan May 2012






(not to be scaled)

2. Publication Version July 2013



Key:

-  Site allocated for housing
-  Area of Separation
-  Borough boundary