

Ribble Valley Borough Council

Examination of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy Development Plan Document

Schedule of Matters and Issues for the Examination

Inspector: Simon Berkeley BA MA MRTPI

Programme Officer: Michelle Haworth
Programme Officer
Examination Office
Ribble Valley Borough Council
Council Offices
Church Walk
Clitheroe
BB7 2RA
07896 064236
programme.officer@ribblevalley.gov.uk

Draft timetable for the Hearing sessions

Date	Morning session 09.30am	Afternoon session 2pm
Day 1 Tuesday 14 January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspector's opening Matter 1: Basis for the overall approach Matter 2: The strategy <p><i>Attendance – to be confirmed</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matter 2: The strategy (Cont) Matter 5: Gypsy and Traveller accommodation <p><i>Attendance – to be confirmed</i></p>
Day 2 Wednesday 15 January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matter 3: Housing <p><i>Attendance – to be confirmed</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matter 3: Housing <p><i>Attendance – to be confirmed</i></p>
Day 3 Thursday 16 January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matter 6: Economic development <p><i>Attendance – to be confirmed</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matter 7: Town centres <p><i>Attendance – to be confirmed</i></p>
Day 4 Friday 17 January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matter 8: Sustainable development and climate change <p><i>Attendance – to be confirmed</i></p>	<p><i>Attendance – to be confirmed</i></p>
Day 5 Tuesday 21 January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matter 9: Infrastructure <p><i>Attendance – to be confirmed</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matter 10: Development management policies <p><i>Attendance – to be confirmed</i></p>
Date	Morning session 10am	Afternoon session 2pm
Day 6 Wednesday 22 January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matter 3: Housing (from Issue 3.5 to 3.12) Matter 4: Affordable housing and housing for the elderly. <p><i>Attendance – to be confirmed</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matter 4: Affordable housing and housing for the elderly (Cont). <p><i>Attendance – to be confirmed</i></p>

As set out in the accompanying Guidance Note, if you have any comments on this draft timetable please contact the Programme Officer by **29 November 2013**.

Every effort will be made to keep to the timetable, but late changes may be unavoidable. Priority will be given to starting the debate on each matter at the appointed time, and it may be necessary to extend the discussion in the afternoon session. The Programme Officer will inform the participants of any late changes to the timetable, but it is the responsibility of the participants to keep themselves up to date with the arrangements and programme.

The starting point for the examination is the submitted version of the Core Strategy ('the Plan'). However, the Council proposes a number of modifications to the Plan as originally submitted. These are set out in a schedule and a revised version of the Plan, both produced by the Council. I may or may not accept these changes. Discussion at the hearing sessions will include debate about the changes proposed under the matters and issues identified below.

Where respondents answering the following questions identify a deficiency in the Plan they should make clear how it should be changed.

Matter 1 – Basis for the overall approach

Issues

- 1.1 Overall, has the plan been prepared in accordance with the legal requirements, including the 'duty to cooperate' imposed by Section 33A of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended)?
- 1.2 Has the plan been prepared in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement and met the minimum consultation requirements in the Regulations?
- 1.3 Has the formulation of the Plan been based on a sound process of sustainability appraisal and testing of reasonable alternatives?
- 1.4 How have the possible effects on European wildlife sites influenced the Plan and the assessment of alternative options?
- 1.5 How has the Plan been influenced by the Sustainable Community Strategy for the district?

Matter 2 – The strategy

Issues

- 2.1 What are the strategic, cross-boundary issues of relevance to the Plan? How does the strategy address them?
- 2.2 Will the Plan deliver the homes, jobs and services required to meet the needs of the whole borough? How have needs in other adjacent authority areas been taken into account?
- 2.3 The Plan's development strategy is set out in Key Statement DS1. It focuses new housing, retail and leisure in Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley and new economic development at the Barrow Enterprise site and Samlesbury Enterprise Zone. In broad terms, is this the most appropriate spatial strategy?
- 2.4 What is the justification for the settlement hierarchy proposed? What evidence/reasoning led to the identification of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley

as the primary centres? What alternatives were considered, and why were they rejected?

- 2.5 The Council's proposed modifications include adding a list of other defined settlements to Key Statement DS1. What criteria have been used to draw up this list?
- 2.6 Is the settlement hierarchy based on robust evidence and sound reasoning? Will this hierarchy lead to the most sustainable spatial distribution of new development? In this respect, are the conclusions of the Sustainability Appraisal founded on robust evidence and sound reasoning?
- 2.7 Overall, is the distribution of development sought the most appropriate strategy, and what alternatives have been rejected?
- 2.8 What is the strategy's intention in relation to the Forest of Bowland AONB? Is new development in the AONB anticipated? What is the strategic approach here, and is the Plan sufficiently clear?
- 2.9 The Key Diagram is on the last page of the Plan, and has a very low profile. To be effective, it would be much better to have it earlier on. Should it be in the development strategy section? Should it more clearly illustrate the Plan's intentions for growth?
- 2.10 How has the risk of flooding been taken into account? Has the sequential, risk based approach required by the NPPF been followed? How has this issue influenced the Plan's formulation and the spatial approach ultimately proposed?
- 2.11 Has the financial cost of any requirements on new development been taken into account? What evidence is there to demonstrate that such costs would not threaten the delivery of the development planned for? In short, is the Plan viable?
- 2.12 To deliver the strategy, is it the Council's intention to allocate land for development in a future Local Plan document, and to identify land for other purposes (for example, to prevent development on it) on a Policies Map? Should the Core Strategy be clearer about this, and set out the commitments to be addressed?
- 2.13 The monitoring framework includes few quantified targets or 'trigger points' for implementing contingency plans. Is it sufficiently robust? Is it sufficiently clear how progress towards delivering the strategy's aims and objectives will be measured, and how and when any contingency plans would be triggered?

Matter 3 – Housing

Issues

- 3.1 As submitted, the Plan sought to deliver 4,000 new homes between 2008 and 2028. The Council proposes to increase this to 5,000.
 - a. What is the explanation for the proposed modification, and why is it necessary for soundness?

- b. What evidence has led to the 5,000 figure being proposed? Is this a reliable source of evidence?
 - c. What regard has been had to the Government's household interim projections for 2011 to 2021?
- 3.2 Key Statement H1 says that the overall housing requirement will be subject to a formal review within five years of the Plan's adoption. What is meant by 'formal review'?
- 3.3 The overall level of new housing delivery appears heavily reliant on the strategic housing site at Standen.
- a. For the avoidance of doubt, is it the intention to allocate the Standen Site on a Policies Map through the Core Strategy? If not, why not?
 - b. Is placing such reliance on one site an appropriate approach? What certainty is there that the Standen site is deliverable and will be delivered in the plan period?
 - c. What infrastructure is necessary to deliver the Standen site? What assurances are there that the necessary infrastructure will be delivered when it is needed?
 - d. Taking account of the infrastructure and other requirements, is the Standen site financially viable? What evidence is there in this respect?
 - e. Given the need for infrastructure delivery, should phasing of the Standen site be included in the Core Strategy?
 - f. Aside from housing, what other uses are anticipated on the Standen site?
- 3.4 The table at paragraph 4.11 indicates the number of new homes for each of the three principal settlements on an individual basis, and gives a figure for the 'other settlements' combined.
- a. Is this the spatial distribution of housing sought by the Plan?
 - b. If so, should the Plan be more robust in explaining that this is a proactive strategy and give an unambiguous commitment to delivering this distribution?
 - c. How has the proportional split between the settlements been arrived at? What justifies this distribution?
 - d. What is the justification for the 'Longridge adjustment'? Is the proposed re-apportionment across the 'other settlements' (excluding Clitheroe and Whalley) the most appropriate course?
 - e. Should the Plan be more specific about the number of new houses anticipated at each of the 'other settlements'? Is it sufficiently clear to properly steer and direct the allocation of land through the Housing and Economic DPD?
 - f. Which 'other settlements' are referred to? Have their relative sustainability credentials been taken into account?
- 3.5 Is there a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years worth of housing, with an additional buffer of 5% moved forward from later in the plan period to provide choice?
- 3.6 In the light of paragraph 47 of the NPPF, should the buffer be 20%? Are there sufficient deliverable sites to provide a 20% buffer?

- 3.7 Is there a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth for years 6 to 10 of the Plan and beyond?
- 3.8 Is there sufficient land available in the right places to deliver the level and spatial distribution of new homes planned for?
- 3.9 What reliance, if any, is placed on windfall sites in the housing land supply?
- 3.10 What approach does the Plan take to housing density? How does this reflect local circumstances?
- 3.11 What proportion of new housing planned for is expected to be on previously developed land? How does the Plan encourage the use of brownfield land?
- 3.12 Should the expected rate of market and affordable housing delivery through the plan period be illustrated by a housing trajectory in the Plan?

Matter 4 – Affordable housing and housing for the elderly

Issues

- 4.1 What is the objectively assessed need for affordable housing?
- 4.2 What level of affordable housing does the Plan anticipate being delivered over the plan period?
- 4.3 Key Statement H3 seeks from residential developments a contribution of 30% affordable housing. Two site size thresholds are given.
 - a. How does the evidence justify the proportion of affordable housing sought and the two site size thresholds?
 - b. Is there a risk that this requirement will render schemes unviable?
 - c. Will the application of Key Statement H3 deliver the amount of affordable housing needed in the places where it is needed?
- 4.4 Key Statement H3 also requires 15% of the units in housing developments to be for elderly people.
 - a. What is the need for housing for the elderly and how will this requirement meet that need?
 - b. How does the evidence justify this proportion?
 - c. Will this requirement apply to all housing schemes, or is a site size threshold intended?
 - d. Is there a risk that this requirement, combined with that in relation to affordable housing, will render schemes unviable?
- 4.5 Paragraph 6.6 of the Plan says that thresholds may change as and when new, updated information is available. How is it intended that the thresholds in the Key Statement will change?

Matter 5 – Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation

Issues

- 5.1 During the suspension of the examination, the Council has produced a new accommodation assessment update dated April 2013. Is the new accommodation assessment based on a robust methodology? Has the Council engaged meaningfully with traveller communities in order to prepare and maintain an up to date understanding of need?
- 5.2 Has the new accommodation assessment been drawn up through collaborative working with neighbouring local planning authorities?
- 5.3 Does the Core Strategy comply with the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites with regard to the identification of a five year supply of deliverable sites, and developable sites or broad locations for growth thereafter?
- 5.4 Planning Policy for Traveller Sites requires fair, criteria based policies for judging applications for traveller sites. Is Policy DMH2 consistent with national policy in this regard?

Matter 6 – Economic development

Issues

- 6.1 Has the quantitative and qualitative needs for all foreseeable types of economic activity over the plan period, including for retail and leisure development, been assessed? What are the objectively assessed needs for land or floorspace for the various types of economic development?
- 6.2 Key Statement EC1 says that the Council will aim to allocate an additional 9 hectares of land for employment purposes in appropriate and sustainable locations.
 - a. Where? What spatial distribution of new economic development does the Plan aim to achieve?
 - b. Why is the Plan not more explicit about how the 9 hectares proposed will be distributed? Does it need to be, in order to properly steer the allocation of land through the Housing and Economic DPD?
 - c. For clarification, is the 9 hectares proposed in addition to new land for employment at Barrow Enterprise Park and the Samlesbury Enterprise Zone, or is the 9 hectares to be divided between these sites and the 'main areas of population growth' (paragraph 7.4)?
 - d. For clarification, does the 9 hectares include land needed for retail and other business uses which do not fall into Classes B1, B2 and B8?
 - e. Where does the Plan aim to deliver the new retail and other business uses needed? Will land also be allocated for these uses in the Housing and Economic DPD?
- 6.3 Is the Plan sufficiently robust in relation to protecting land and buildings presently in business uses?
- 6.4 What does the Plan do to support the rural economy? Does it do enough?

Matter 7 – Town centres

Issues

- 7.1 Does the Plan set out policies for the management and growth of centres over the Plan period?
- 7.2 What does the Plan do to ensure the vitality and viability of the centres identified in the hierarchy?
- 7.3 The Retail Study Update 2013 identifies some convenience and comparison retail capacity in Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley. What does the Plan do to address this?
- 7.4 Will land be allocated in centres through future Local Plan documents to meet in full the needs for retail, leisure, office and other main town centre uses?

Matter 8 – Sustainable development and climate change

Issues

- 8.1 Paragraphs 93 and 97 of the NPPF explain the key role of planning in tackling climate change and what action local planning authorities should take. What are the Council's strategic priorities for renewable and low carbon energy?
- 8.2 How does the Plan provide a positive strategy to promote energy from renewable and low carbon sources? Has the Council considered identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources?
- 8.3 Specifically in relation to plan making, the NPPF says that local planning authorities should work with other authorities and providers to assess the quality and capacity of infrastructure for energy, including heat, and take account of the need for such infrastructure. Has this been done?
- 8.4 Policy DME5 says that the Council will 'request' that residential developments of 10 or more units and other developments over 1000m² meet at least 10% of their predicted energy requirements from decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources. Key Statement EN3 indicates that 'planning permission will only be granted' where this requirement is met.
 - a. Is there an internal inconsistency in the Plan?
 - b. Have any assessments been undertaken to demonstrate the viability of the thresholds and proportions proposed?
- 8.5 Key Statement EN3 relates to sustainable design and construction. As submitted, it does not include any specific standards to be met. The Council has proposed some text to address this. What does the new wording proposed aim to achieve? Is the wording effective in its present form?

Matter 9 – Infrastructure

Issues

- 9.1 Is the Plan based on a sound assessment of infrastructure requirements and their deliverability, including expected sources of funding?
- 9.2 What are the key infrastructure requirements for the Plan's successful delivery? What reassurances are there that these elements can and will be delivered when and where they are needed? Has the cost of these infrastructure elements been estimated, and funding sources identified?
- 9.3 Does the Plan include strategic policies to deliver the provision of infrastructure, and plan positively for infrastructure, as required by the NPPF (notably in paragraphs 156 and 157)?
- 9.4 What does the Plan do to ensure that the borough is provided with open space of an appropriate amount, type and quality? Is it supported by a robust and up to date assessment of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities as required by the NPPF (particularly paragraph 73)? If not, is it justified and consistent with national policy?

Matter 10 – Development management policies

Issues

- 10.1 Are the development management policies justified and written in such a way so as to be effective?
- 10.2 Are the policies consistent with national policy? If there are any divergences, how are these justified by local circumstances?
- 10.3 A number of policies refer to the 'proposals map'. What is the Council's intention in relation to the Policies Map?