



Ribble Valley  
Borough Council

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# HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DPD SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL REPORT

Non-Technical Summary

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Incorporating

**EC HARRIS**  
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## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>AAP</b>	<b>Area Action Plan</b>
<b>AMR</b>	<b>Annual Monitoring Report</b>
<b>AONB</b>	<b>Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</b>
<b>AQMA</b>	<b>Air Quality Management Area</b>
<b>BAP</b>	<b>Biodiversity Action Plan</b>
<b>BHS</b>	<b>Biological Heritage Site</b>
<b>cSAC</b>	<b>Candidate SAC</b>
<b>DCLG</b>	<b>Department of Communities and Local Government</b>
<b>DPD</b>	<b>Development Plan Document</b>
<b>FRA</b>	<b>Flood Risk Assessment</b>
<b>FZ</b>	<b>Flood Zone</b>
<b>GP</b>	<b>General Practitioner</b>
<b>HED</b>	<b>Housing and Economic Development</b>
<b>HRA</b>	<b>Habitats Regulations Assessment</b>
<b>IMD</b>	<b>Index of Multiple Deprivation</b>
<b>LA</b>	<b>Land Allocations</b>
<b>LDS</b>	<b>Local Development Scheme</b>
<b>LSOA</b>	<b>Lower Super Output Area</b>
<b>NPPF</b>	<b>National Planning Policy Framework</b>
<b>NPPG</b>	<b>National Planning Policy Guidance</b>
<b>NTS</b>	<b>Non-Technical Summary</b>
<b>pSPA</b>	<b>Potential SPA</b>
<b>RIGS</b>	<b>Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Site</b>
<b>RVBC</b>	<b>Ribble Valley Borough Council</b>
<b>SA</b>	<b>Sustainability Appraisal</b>
<b>SAC</b>	<b>Special Area of Conservation</b>
<b>SCI</b>	<b>Sites of Community Importance</b>
<b>SCS</b>	<b>Sustainable Community Strategy</b>
<b>SEA</b>	<b>Strategic Environmental Assessment</b>
<b>SPA</b>	<b>Special Protection Area</b>
<b>SSSI</b>	<b>Site of Special Scientific Interest</b>
<b>SuDS</b>	<b>Sustainable (urban) Drainage Systems</b>

## 1 INTRODUCTION

This Non-Technical Summary has been prepared to accompany the combined Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) (hereafter referred to as SA) prepared for the emerging Housing and Economic Development (HED) Development Plan Document (DPD) for Ribble Valley Borough Council. It is intended that the emerging HED DPD will cover the period up to 2028.

Following the adoption of the Core Strategy in December 2014 the Council is preparing a HED DPD. This plan sets out more detailed for matters relating to housing and economy to fully implement the policies of the Core Strategy. In particular, it allocates specific sites for housing and employment development.

The potential impacts of the HED DPD have been assessed in accordance with requirements of the UK SEA regulations. The SA process, its outcomes and recommendations are reported in the main SA Report of which this report is a summary.

This document is the Non-Technical Summary (NTS) of the SA Report. It outlines in plain English the process that has been followed, beginning with scoping, which sets out the context, evidence base (or “baseline”) and proposed method for the assessment, and culminating in submission of the SA Report for consultation, as well as setting out key findings of the assessment.

The HED DPD, SA Report and this NTS will be made available for comment during the public consultation.

## 2 WHAT IS SA?

SA is a systematic process for assessing social, economic and environmental impacts of a plan and aims to ensure that sustainable development is at the heart of the plan-making process.

It is a legal requirement that a Local Plan is subject to SA. Guidance stipulates that the SA must comply with the requirements of the SEA Regulations.

Government guidance subdivides the SA process into a series of stages as follows:

- A. Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope
- B. Developing and Refining Options and Assessing Effects
- C. Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal Report
- D. Consultation on the Draft Plan and the SA Report
- E. Monitoring the significant effects of implementing

We are currently at Stage B of the process and this NTS is being consulted upon alongside the Preferred Options of the HED DPD and an interim SA Report. The SA process is intended to be iterative with on-going feedback of recommendations to the plan-makers.

## 3 THE HED DPD

Ribble Valley Borough Council located within the Lancashire County (refer to Figure 3-1) is preparing a HED DPD which will provide a planning and development strategy to guide future development in Ribble Valley up to 2028. The HED DPD includes both strategic policies and land allocations which identify land that meets development needs and protects sites important for their environmental, social or economic importance.

Figure 3-1 Overview map of the Ribble Valley Region.



## 4 SCOPE OF THE SA

The SA process commenced in 2016 with a Scoping Report. This set out the baseline information, scope of the assessment and methodology to be applied when assessing the vision, objectives and policy. It was published for a five-week consultation in 2016. Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency were invited to comment on the contents of the Scoping Report to help shape development of the SA.

The geographical scope of the SA has been driven by the geographical scope of the HED DPD – i.e. Ribble Valley District. For the allocations within the HED DPD, the SA considered the spatial extent of their likely impacts. In some cases, the impacts were local to the site and in others were predicted to be more wide-ranging.

The HED DPD is intended to cover a 20-year period, and so the timescale reflected in the SA is 2008 – 2028. If there are likely to be any sustainability effects of the HED DPD that would last longer than this, these were considered.

## 5 KEY SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES

To enable a robust assessment of the HED DPD information was collected to understand the existing conditions and characteristics of the district. This included aspects such as population dynamics, levels of deprivation, health, environmental resources, employment patterns and the condition of housing stock and its affordability.

The baseline information was then used as the basis for identifying key sustainability issues in the District.

Table 5-1

Key Sustainability Issues and Opportunities

Baseline Topic	Key Issues / Opportunity
Population	The Borough has a small, ageing and dispersed population, which has implications for access to services for those living outside of the main urban centres (Clitheroe and Longridge). Availability of health care provision is likely to be an issue for elderly residents in some settlements. The need to retain the younger sectors of the population is important as it could also have effects upon the economy of the Borough and its attractiveness for inward investment.
Education and Qualifications	Educational attainment in the Borough is very good compared to county, regional and national levels, and this needs to be maintained. Opportunities to improve vocational training opportunities should be pursued, as this is likely to benefit local employers and would also help to develop training linked to key growth sectors across the region and could help to encourage more inward investment in the Borough.
Human Health	Health in Ribble Valley is generally good, although poorer levels of health have been identified in Littlemoor and Whalley wards. There is an elderly population in the Borough and it is essential that the elderly have sufficient access to health care facilities which in turn is also likely to put increasing pressure on health facilities in the Borough. There are opportunities to further promote the outdoor recreational pursuits in the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) to benefit the health of the local population.
Water	Water quality in the Borough is very good and it is important that these high levels are maintained. Significant areas of Flood Risk exist, primarily associated with the River Ribble and its tributaries. Areas at risk from flooding should be protected from development that would increase that risk. New developments should be encouraged to use Sustainable (urban) Drainage Systems (SuDS) to manage runoff and further reduce flood risk. New development in Flood Zone 3 (FZ3) should be avoided where possible or include appropriate mitigation measures. New developments and households should also be encouraged to minimise water use and to re-use rainwater where possible.
Soil and Land Quality	Where previously developed sites exist, the aim should be to continue to remediate and re-use them, although this should be undertaken on a site-by-site basis as some brownfield sites may have biodiversity constraints.
Air Quality	An Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) was declared in Clitheroe for Nitrogen Dioxide (NO <sub>2</sub> ) in 2010 but no new areas of poor air quality have been identified, as such no further AQMAs have been declared. Opportunities should be sought to reduce road traffic and promote public transport use to further improve air quality.
Climatic Factors and Energy	Reducing carbon footprint through energy reduction and efficiency and the promotion of renewable energy sources should be a priority for the Borough. New developments should be encouraged to include sustainable design principles such as the incorporation of solar panels, although due care must be given to the preservation of biodiversity, landscape and heritage resources when siting renewable energy projects.
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	There is a very high quality environment in the Borough, which needs to be preserved and enhanced. In particular, the Bowland Fells Special Protection Area (SPA) is subject to international protection and has a series of Conservation Objectives which need to be met. The condition of the Site of Specific Scientific Interests (SSSI) needs to be improved and opportunities should be sought to deliver biodiversity enhancements through the DPD.
Cultural Heritage	The Borough has a large number of designated and non-designated heritage assets including scheduled monuments, listed buildings, conservation areas etc. which could potentially be affected either directly or indirectly by new development. The setting of heritage assets is also an important consideration when allocating land for development. All cultural heritage features should be appropriately conserved and enhanced. Whalley Abbey Scheduled Monument has declined in condition in recent years which should be considered when allocating land in the vicinity. Ribble

Baseline Topic	Key Issues / Opportunity
	Valley has great tourism potential due to the quality of its natural environment which is complemented in many cases by cultural heritage resources.
Landscape	A large portion of the Borough is designated as part of the Forest of Bowland AONB. It is essential that landscape quality and character is restored, maintained and enhanced. The Borough's high quality landscape is a vital resource for attracting visitors and enhancing the quality of life for residents. Opportunities should also be sought to enhance design and landscaping at the local level to improve the quality of the local environment.
Waste and Minerals	The major strategic landfill site for the Borough is located in a neighbouring authority and Ribble Valley is therefore an exporter of waste. Opportunities should be sought to further improve composting and recycling performance in new developments. Sustainable sourcing and waste management principles should be promoted for all new developments that occur in the Borough.
Transport	Opportunities should be sought to reduce dependence on the private car and increase public transport use. It will be important to ensure that any new employment sites can be easily accessed by public transport. The good road connections to other parts of Lancashire and proximity to the motorway network are both an opportunity and a threat to the Borough, as they could help to encourage inward investment but they also enable the Borough's residents to easily commute to neighbouring Boroughs for employment purposes leading to a leakage of skills. Whilst external linkages are good, internal linkages within the Borough could be improved.
Economy	Key statistics suggest that the Ribble Valley economy is performing well having low levels of unemployment and supporting a strong culture of entrepreneurial behaviour. It will be important for such qualities to be maintained and further improved. There are high levels of skills in the Borough, although a significant number of people out-commute on a daily basis for employment purposes, leading to a daily leakage of skilled individuals. There is a need to provide jobs that maximise the skills of the resident population to promote more sustainable travel patterns and to benefit the Borough's long-term economy. There are potential opportunities for the Borough linked to the lack of high quality employment sites in other locations, for example, there is potential to develop the A59 into an employment corridor. Some households in the Borough experience lower than average incomes and addressing the needs of those on lower incomes and raising their skills levels should be a key priority. There are further opportunities to capitalise upon the Borough's environmental and cultural assets and to develop the tourist industry.
Deprivation and Living Environment	Ribble Valley is overall a prosperous Borough with low levels of deprivation. However, owing to its rural nature there are issues associated with access to services and facilities which largely affect the wards in the north of the Borough.
Housing	Although there has been an increase in recent years there still remains a shortage of affordable housing across Ribble Valley so this should remain a priority for the Borough. There has been an increase in the number of wealthy in-migrants to the Borough in recent years which is creating housing affordability problems for local people. There is need for increased provision of sheltered housing for the elderly and to provide for the housing needs of the younger sectors of society. The issue of homelessness must also continue to be effectively addressed. Sustainable development should be promoted where possible. The overarching aim is to make the design of homes more resilient and sustainable and to reduce carbon footprint.

## 5.1 Policy context

A review of other international, national, regional and local plans and environmental protection objectives that could influence the development of the SA and the HED DPD was undertaken and is recorded in the SA Report. The review of these documents focussed upon identifying key environmental and sustainability objectives that would need to be considered in the SA and the HED DPD. Over 100 documents were reviewed including the World Summit on Sustainable Development Report, Johannesburg (2002), relevant European Directives, the UK Sustainable Development Strategy, National Planning Policy Framework, the



Forest of Bowland Management Plan, and the Ribble Valley Borough Council Core Strategy Adopted 2014 amongst others.

## 6 SA FRAMEWORK

Table 6-1 contains the SA Objectives which form the basis of the assessment stage framework – they were developed through a review of plans, programmes and environmental objectives, baseline data, key issues and opportunities (noted in Section 5), and the outcomes of consultation on the SA scope. It is against these objectives that the HED DPD strategic policies, options and allocations were assessed. Each SA Objective is supported by a set of sub-objectives which help to establish the scope / 'boundaries' of that objective.

Table 6-1 SA Framework

SA Objective and Sub-Objectives
<b>1. To reduce crime, disorder and fear of crime</b>
To maintain low crime levels To reduce the fear of crime To reduce levels of anti-social behaviour To encourage safety by design
<b>2. To improve levels of educational attainment for all age groups and all sectors of society</b>
To maintain and increase levels of participation and attainment in education for all members of society. To improve the provision of education and training facilities To improve access to and involvement in higher education for 16-19 year olds
<b>3. To improve physical and mental health for all and reduce health inequalities</b>
To reduce health inequalities amongst different groups in the community To improve access to health and social care services To promote healthy lifestyles
<b>4. To increase the availability of quality affordable housing and social and sheltered accommodation in areas most at need</b>
To tackle homelessness more effectively To increase the availability of affordable housing To reduce the number of unfit homes To reduce the number of vacant housing
<b>5. To improve access to basic goods, services and amenities for all groups</b>
To improve access to cultural and leisure facilities To maintain and improve access to essential services and facilities
<b>6. To encourage sustainable economic growth and business development across the borough</b>
To diversify employment opportunities To increase employment opportunities To encourage economic growth
<b>7. To develop the skills and training needed to establish and maintain a healthy labour market</b>
To increase levels of participation and attainment in education for all members of society To improve the number of 16-19 moving in to higher education
<b>8. To encourage economic inclusion</b>
To reduce levels of unemployment To improve physical accessibility to jobs
<b>9. To protect and enhance biodiversity</b>
To protect and enhance designated sites of nature conservation importance To protect and enhance wildlife especially rare and endangered species To protect and enhance habitats and wildlife corridors To provide opportunities for people to access wildlife and open green spaces

<b>SA Objective and Sub-Objectives</b>
<b>10. To protect and enhance the borough's landscape and townscape character and quality</b>
To protect and enhance landscape character and quality To protect and enhance townscape character and quality To promote sensitive design in development
<b>11. To protect and enhance the cultural heritage resource</b>
To protect and enhance historic buildings and sites To protect and enhance historic landscape/townscape value
<b>12. To protect and enhance the quality of water features and resources</b>
To protect and enhance ground and surface water quality
<b>13. To guard against land contamination and encourage the appropriate re-use of brownfield sites within the urban boundary and to protect soil resources</b>
To reduce the amount of derelict, contaminated, and vacant land. To encourage development of brownfield land where appropriate To protect soil functions
<b>14. To limit and adapt to climate change</b>
To reduce or manage flooding To reduce greenhouse gas emissions To encourage the inclusion of SuDS
<b>15. To protect and improve air quality</b>
To protect and improve local air quality
<b>16. To increase energy efficiency and require the use of renewable energy sources</b>
To increase energy efficiency To increase the use of renewable energy To reduce the use of energy
<b>17. To ensure sustainable use of natural resources</b>
To reduce the demand for raw materials To promote the use of recycled and secondary materials in construction
<b>18. To minimise waste, increase re-use and recycling</b>
To increase the proportion of waste recycling and re-use To reduce the production of waste To reduce the proportion of waste landfilled
<b>19. To promote the use of more sustainable modes of transport</b>
To reduce the use of private car To encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport Encourage the uptake of ICT

The SA Framework underpins the assessment methodology and comprises a series of SA Objectives (covering social, economic and environmental issues) that are used to test the performance of the plan being assessed. Whilst the SEA Regulations do not require the use of SA Objectives, they are a recognised tool for undertaking the assessment and are aspirations/goals that an authority/organisation should work towards achieving.

The SA Objectives have been developed using the review of other relevant plans, programmes and environmental objectives, the baseline data, the key issue and opportunities, and the outcomes of consultation on the SA scope.

## 7 ASSESSMENT OF THE HED DPD

### 7.1 Appraisal of the HED DPD Land Allocations

The HED DPD includes two new housing and three new employment allocations. The Council initially proposed 13 alternative site options in their 2016 report, 'Regulation 18 Issues and Options Consultation Housing and Economic Development DPD' and following public consultation refined this down to the five preferred options. Of the 13 site options, four were preferred options, nine were rejected and one alternative option was taken forward totalling five preferred options. Table 7-1 clearly sets out the preferred and rejected options.

The HED DPD also includes 59 allocations which are already committed having secured or are in the process of securing planning consent and these matters were considered through the Development Management process.

Table 7-1 Preferred and rejected site options

Preferred Site Options	Rejected Site Options
Mellor1 – 0.29ha (10 dwellings)	Wilpshire1 - 2.5ha (27 dwellings)
Wilpshire3 – 5.37ha (227 dwellings)	Wilpshire2 – 0.36ha (14 dwellings)
Employment Site 1 – 1.7ha	Mellor2 – 0.09ha (3 dwellings)
Employment Site 4 – 1ha	Mellor3 – 0.14ha (5 dwellings)
Site 10 Land at Higher College Farm - 1.5ha	Chatburn1 – 0.1ha (3.5 dwellings)
	Chatburn2 – 0.39ha (14 dwellings)
	Chatburn3 – 0.21ha (7 dwellings)
	Employment Site 2 – 1.8ha
	Employment Site 3 – 2.2ha

33 alternative site allocations were also put forward through the 'call for sites' exercise undertaken by the Council, however, it was deemed that all but one of these sites did not meet the Council's Development Strategy and therefore were rejected as being unreasonable alternatives. Site 10 (Land at Higher College Farm) was the only alternative site to advance to the Options stage and was consequently taken forward as a preferred option (see section 7.2.2).

Further to the 33 alternative allocations an additional 13 site options were put forward by the Council.

A brief summary of the appraisals of the preferred, committed and alternative options are summarised in the remaining sections of this chapter.

#### 7.1.1 HED DPD Housing Allocation Preferred Options

##### Mellor1 Option (HAL1)

One of the three sites proposed in Mellor has been taken forward by the Council. The Mellor1 Option would contribute towards meeting the Borough's housing needs and has potential to result in positive economic effects. This is because the site is close to a key employment area, which when coupled with the strong existing sustainable transport links available in the area, could increase accessibility to jobs. Educational facilities (including further educational facilities) are in close proximity having positive effects on educational attainment.

The site also has good access to community services and a GP surgery. Access to open space could improve health levels in the area through an increase in physical activity.

However, in the absence of mitigation, the site could result in negative effects on both local landscape character and local heritage assets through the development of greenfield land and being close to a Scheduled Monument. Given the scale of the site the effects are likely to be small and it should be possible to mitigate this through incorporating green infrastructure and sensitive design methods to integrate the new development with its surroundings and to avoid adverse effects on the setting of the Scheduled monument.

As with all development, the proposal would also lead to a likely increase in demand for natural resources and increase the amount of waste sent to landfill. The Council should seek to promote the use of recycled/reused materials in order to decrease the demand on raw materials during construction and provide on-site waste separation facilities wherever possible to encourage recycling in the areas earmarked for development.

There is a total of two relatively small sites proposed in Mellor therefore it is deemed unlikely that any significant cumulative effects will occur through the development of these sites.

### **Wilpshire3 Option (HAL2)**

Overall, the Wilpshire3 Option would make a significant contribution towards meeting the Borough's housing needs and has potential to result in positive economic effects. This is because the site is easily accessible to a number of employment areas, which when coupled with the strong existing sustainable transport links available in the area could increase accessibility to jobs. Educational facilities (including further educational facilities) are in close proximity having positive effects on educational attainment.

The site also has good access to community services, a GP surgery and access to open space. The latter could improve health levels in the area through an increase in physical activity.

However, in the absence of mitigation, the site could result in negative effects on both local landscape character through the development of greenfield land. Given the scale of the site the effects could be significant locally, however, it should be possible to mitigate these negative effects through incorporating green infrastructure and sensitive design methods to integrate the new development with its surroundings. The loss of greenfield land in the development of this site has potential to affect biodiversity. It is adjacent to a non-priority habitat and could also reduce habitat connectivity. However, it should be possible to provide appropriate mitigation in the form of retention or creation of new green infrastructure.

The site is adjacent to a waterbody which could lead to pollutants entering the watercourse resulting in negative effects. Site drainage should be designed to account for the flow of domestic pollutants away from the water body and to an appropriate water treatment method.

Wilpshire3 is one of two sites that has been put forward for development in this area – the other being a small employment site. Cumulatively, the activity generated by these sites could increase traffic congestion on local roads by increasing the number of private cars on the roads and could also lead to an increase in emissions to air having a negative effect on local air quality. However, the site is well served by sustainable transport links which could help to reduce this impact. The two sites however would contribute significantly to the Boroughs housing target and could also generate positive economic effects for the area.

## **7.1.2 HED DPD Employment Allocation Preferred Options**

### **Employment Site 1 (Land at Sykes Holt, Mellor) (EAL1)**

Employment Site 1 would increase accessibility to local employment opportunities and would help strengthen the Borough's economy. This is a large employment site located close to existing residential areas and the area is relatively well served by sustainable transport links.

The activity generated by the site could increase traffic congestion on local roads which in turn could lead to a rise in emissions to air. However, the site is well served by sustainable transport links which should help to offset this impact.

In the absence of mitigation, the site could result in localised negative effects on both local landscape character and the setting of local heritage assets, notably nearby listed buildings. However, it should be possible to partly mitigate this through incorporating green infrastructure (for example replacement woodland planting) and sensitive design methods. The site is at high risk of affecting protected or priority species as it would result in

the loss of an area of woodland habitat. It is recommended that an appropriate ecological survey is undertaken and the current woodland loss is avoided, reduced or replaced.

The development of greenfield land could also create a new target for crime although given crime rates are low in the Borough, the risk is considered to be low and it should be possible to reduce this further through appropriate secure by design principles.

The site is both adjacent to and contains a waterbody which could be at risk of pollution from run-off or construction. Site drainage should be designed to account for the flow of commercial and domestic pollutants away from the water body and to an appropriate water treatment method.

There is a total of two relatively small sites proposed in Mellor, therefore it is deemed unlikely that any significant cumulative effects will occur through the development of these sites.

### **Employment Site 4 (Time Technology Park) (EAL2)**

Employment site 4 is a relatively large employment site which would increase accessibility to local employment opportunities and could help to reduce the Borough's unemployment rate as the site falls within an area of higher than average employment deprivation. Furthermore, existing sustainable transport networks in the area are strong thereby adding to the improvement in accessibility to jobs.

The site would develop a largely brownfield site which could lead to positive effects on the local landscape character and reduces the uptake of greenfield land. It is a positive use of land resources.

The activity generated by the site could increase traffic congestion on local roads and could lead to a rise in emissions to air having a minor negative effect on local air quality. However, the site is well served by sustainable transport links which should help to reduce this impact.

The site is adjacent to a waterbody which could be at risk of pollution from run-off or construction. Site drainage should be designed to account for the flow of commercial and domestic pollutants away from the water body and to an appropriate water treatment method.

Employment Site 4 is one of six sites in Balderstone, Read and Simonstone (five of which are commitments) all of which are in close proximity to each other. Cumulatively, the activity generated by these sites will bring about negative impacts on local transport routes by increasing the number of private cars on the roads leading to increased traffic congestion on local roads particularly at peak times on and around the A59. It is likely that local emissions to air will increase due to the use of private cars accessing the employment and housing developments. However, poor air quality is currently not a significant issue in these areas and increased sustainable transport provisions have been recommended in order to ease potential congestion and help maintain current air quality standards.

The employment sites proposed are likely to contribute to a positive cumulative effect on the local economy through additional job creation and increased inward investment.

### **Site 10 (Employment Land at Higher College Farm) (EAL3)**

The development of Employment Site 10 would increase accessibility to local employment opportunities and would help strengthen the Borough's economy. This is a large employment site located close to existing residential areas and the area is relatively well served by sustainable transport links.

The activity generated by the site could increase traffic congestion on local roads and could lead to a rise in emissions to air having a negative effect on local air quality. However, the site is well served by sustainable transport links which should reduce this impact.

In the absence of mitigation, the site could result in a negative effect on local landscape character through the development of greenfield land. However, it should be possible to mitigate this through incorporating green infrastructure and sensitive design methods to integrate the new development with its surroundings. The loss of greenfield land in the development of this site has potential to affect biodiversity. However, it should be possible to provide appropriate mitigation in the form of retention of creation of new green infrastructure.

The development of greenfield land could also create a new target for crime although given crime rates are low in the Borough, the risk is considered to be low and it should be possible to reduce this further through appropriate secure by design principles.

The site is both adjacent to and contains a waterbody which could lead to pollutants entering the watercourse resulting in negative effects. Site drainage should be designed to account for the flow of commercial and domestic pollutants away from the water body and to an appropriate water treatment method.

Site 10 is one of seven sites in Longridge (six of which are commitments) all of which are in relatively close proximity to each other. Cumulatively, the activity generated by these sites may bring about negative impacts on local transport routes by increasing the number of private cars on the roads leading to increased traffic congestion on local roads particularly at peak times in and around central Longridge. It is likely that the large size of the developments will cause a cumulative impact on local landscape/ townscape character of Longridge. Green infrastructure and sensitive design measures have been proposed in order to ensure these effects are mitigated against. It is likely that local emissions to air will increase due to the use of private cars moving in/out of employment and housing developments although at this scale it is not clear whether or not this would be significant. Increased sustainable transport provisions have been recommended in order to help maintain current air quality standards.

Negative cumulative effects may occur on local educational and health care facilities due to increased demand that development of the area will attract. Sustainable transport provisions should be increased to key service areas in order to allow easier access to a GP surgery, primary/ secondary schools and key amenities. Furthermore, consideration should be given to commissioning additional educational and healthcare capacity in the area.

### **7.1.3 HED DPD Committed Site Allocations**

59 committed sites are also included in the HED DPD. These include 45 housing sites (inclusive of the one residentially-led mixed-use site) in: Gisburn, Clitheroe, Chatburn, Longridge, Hurst Green, Barrow, Whalley, Billington, Sabden, Read, Ribchester and Langho. This equates to a total of 4,331 new dwellings and at least 18.7ha of employment land is also included in Balderstone, Barrow, Clitheroe, Simonstone and Wilpshire. A summary of the committed site assessment can be found below, the detailed site assessment sheets can be found in Appendix D.

Overall, the committed developments would contribute significantly to meeting the Borough's housing needs. The committed employment sites would increase accessibility to jobs and maintain and improve levels of economic growth and inward investment potential.

The overall location of development has sought to maximise proximity to existing services and facilities through proximity to existing settlements. This includes schools and health care facilities. However, some negative cumulative effects may occur due to the increase in demand caused by development. New infrastructure of this kind may be required as part of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Sustainable transport provisions should also be increased to key service areas in order to allow easier access to healthcare, schools and key amenities. The development of housing and employment sites on greenfield land could also provide new targets for crime. However, crime levels in the Borough are generally very low and new development is generally of either a very small scale or it would be possible to mitigate through secure by design measures. Cumulatively, the activity generated by these sites could bring about potential negative impacts on local transport routes by increasing the number of private cars on the roads leading to increased traffic congestion on local roads particularly at peak times in and around urban centres and main transport routes. This increase in private car use would lead to increase emissions to air having a negative effect on local air quality, this is a particular problem in the Clitheroe area where there is currently an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). However, this problem could be offset or reduced because the existing sustainable transport network in the borough is relatively strong. It is recommended that further sustainable transport opportunities should be maximised and promoted to mitigate potential air quality and congestion issues.

It is likely that development on this scale would also cause a cumulative impact on the Borough's local landscape and townscape character. The majority of the sites are located on greenfield land, although many sites are very small and close to or within existing settlements. The larger sites (for example at Standen) would have a greater overall impact although impacts are expected to be more localised and it is not anticipated that this would affect the Borough's most sensitive landscapes in the AONB. Through careful design that respects local character and includes green infrastructure as appropriate it should be possible to greatly reduce this impact. Some allocations may also have adverse effects on the setting of heritage assets. However, again it should be possible to minimise or neutralise these effects through careful design.

Similarly, there would be a collective loss of greenfield sites and rural features which may adversely affect biodiversity. No designated sites would be affected, however, and it should be possible to provide appropriate mitigation in the form of retention of features such as trees, hedgerows or ponds or to provide alternative planting as part of new green infrastructure on all but the small sites.

A number of sites fall within Flood Zone 2 (FZ2) and/or Flood Zone 3 (FZ3) and are at risk of flooding or at risk of exacerbating current flood risk therefore a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) should be carried out on each relevant site and development should include flood defences and ensure the use of SuDS where necessary.

#### **7.1.4 HED DPD Rejected Alternative Site Allocations**

Alternative site options were assessed using the SA Framework in accordance with legal requirements. The purpose of the assessment was to determine the sustainability strengths and weaknesses of each option such that this information could be used by the plan-makers to inform their decision to select the preferred options.

33 alternative site allocations were put forward through the 'call for sites' exercise undertaken by the Council. Further suggestions for alternative uses and site amalgamations were also made. The Council has considered all the sites put forward. However, the vast majority of these sites were rejected for further consideration as they were not in accordance with the locational requirements of the Core Strategy development strategy and/or provision would be beyond a scale identified in the Core Strategy requirements. In addition, there were characteristics related to individual sites which preclude further development e.g. location in Green Belt.

Further to the 33 alternative allocations an additional 13 site options were put forward by the Council. Of the 13 site options, four were preferred options and are covered above, nine were rejected and one alternative option was taken forward totalling five preferred options. A summary of the SA appraisal for these sites can be found in the full SA Report.

## **7.2 Appraisal of the HED DPD Policies**

The HED DPD includes five policies these have also been assessed to determine their sustainability performance and to provide recommendations for sustainability improvements (detailed policy appraisal sheets can be found in Appendix F).

### **Policy CRM1 - Clitheroe Market Redevelopment**

Overall, Policy CRM1 scored relatively positively against the SA objectives particularly for the social and economic aspects. The policy encourages growth in central Clitheroe, an existing centre, which could help to reduce instances of crime and anti-social behaviour through the regeneration of this site. This central location could also help to encourage the use of public transport, pedestrian and cycle links compared with out-of-town areas. This may also indirectly benefit healthier lifestyles and increased physical activity.

The improvements to and introduction of new facilities, shops and services in central Clitheroe would benefit accessibility given its central location near to a large local population and easily accessible to pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users. By increasing the provision of facilities, retail and services in Clitheroe, the policy encourages employment in an area of relatively high employment deprivation which is already served by infrastructure. The policy could thereby potentially increase the diversity and the number of employment opportunities in Clitheroe. By promoting retail growth in Clitheroe, employment opportunities will be promoted in this area that are accessible to some of the highest areas of employment deprivation in the district. The focus of potentially lower-skilled jobs in these areas has potential to encourage economic inclusion.

Focusing well-designed development in Clitheroe can help benefit townscape character and quality and also utilise previously developed land. Encouraging further amenities in Clitheroe could lead to a higher likelihood of car journeys in and around the city centre consequently resulting in a likely increase in local greenhouse gas emissions thus having a negative effect on local air quality. Development of the market could lead to an increase in energy consumption and therefore it is recommended that the lowest possible carbon footprint is achieved in line with national technical standards (and local policy). This would, however, be offset by the good accessibility of the site allowing easy access via sustainable means. Development would also lead to an increase in waste production and would likely trigger an increase in demand for raw materials during the

construction stage of redevelopment. However, the development would make use of a previously developed site as opposed to greenfield land. It is recommended that the policy promotes the use of recycled/ reused materials during construction in order to reduce this demand and on-site waste separation facilities should be provided wherever possible in order to encourage the recycling/ reuse of waste materials.

### **Policy MCB - Main Centre Boundaries**

Overall, Policy MCB would result in mainly neutral effects against the SA objectives with some minor positive effects. By clearly defining main centre boundaries in the district and securing the future of existing shopping areas, this would help to increase accessibility to basic goods and services. This could also help to create and maintain thriving economic centres, an effect that could be increased through the introduction of new retail areas within the urban edges so long as they are still accessible. Furthermore, the relevant Core Strategy policy also states that these developments are 'intended to serve a wide catchment area' which could help promote economic inclusion in the borough.

The reuse of underused brownfield land or buildings in the main centres could result in positive effects on the local landscape character and the setting of any heritage assets in the area through replacement of unsympathetic buildings.

### **Policy OS1 - Open Space**

Policy OS1 scored positively overall against social and environmental SA objectives. In seeking to protect local open spaces, recreation and leisure from inappropriate development, the policy could help to encourage and promote healthier lifestyles through increased physical activity levels.

The policy could maintain connectivity within open space networks which could benefit tourism through the maintenance or even enhancement of Ribble Valley's natural assets.

The policy has the potential to protect and enhance biodiversity through the protection of open spaces and has the potential to indirectly protect heritage assets if there are unknown heritage assets in the locations that are afforded protection. There could also be indirect, positive impacts for the setting of built heritage and the historic landscape and the policy could also support the protection of local townscapes and landscape character. The retention of green space in the Borough could aid in the management of flood risk the areas identified and could potentially even reduce any exacerbation of this risk through climate change as these areas can provide flood storage capacity or benefit infiltration.

### **Policy TV1 - Traveller Sites**

Policy TV1 performed relatively positively against the SA objectives with positive effects mainly being recorded against social and economic objectives. The policy take account of the amenity of neighbouring properties and makes reference to the site having no 'unacceptable impacts on the immediate surroundings'.

Policy states that sites should be located close to amenities, services and goods which could reduce reliance on private cars however, development could still lead to an increase in private car movements in the areas identified for development therefore increasing local emissions to air. Policy also states that sites will be located in close proximity to educational and health facilities potentially increasing educational attainment for residents of sites and improving health and wellbeing.

Development would lead to increase in waste production. It is recommended that the policy promotes the use of recycled/ reused materials in order to reduce demand for raw materials and on-site waste separation facilities should be provided wherever possible to encourage recycling/ reuse of waste materials.

## **8 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS**

The SEA Directive requires that the assessment includes identification of cumulative and synergistic effects (where the combined effects are greater than the sum of their component parts). The cumulative effects of the HED DPD are summarised in the full SA Report



## 9 MONITORING

The SEA Regulations require that the plan is monitored to test the actual significant effects of implementing the plan against those predicted through the assessment. This process helps to ensure that any unforeseen, undesirable environmental effects are identified and remedial action is implemented accordingly. Likewise, it is beneficial to check that the effects (including beneficial ones) occur as predicted by the SA.

Based on the assessment conducted on the options and identification of potential significant environmental effects, a monitoring framework has been constructed, this can be found in the full SA Report. Monitoring will be undertaken following adoption of the DPD.

Monitoring is an ongoing process integral to the plan's implementation and can be used to:

- Determine the performance of the plan and its contribution to objectives and targets;
- Identify the performance of mitigation measures;
- Fill data gaps identified earlier in the SA process;
- Identify undesirable sustainability effects; and
- Confirm whether sustainability predictions were accurate.

## 10 NEXT STEPS

This Non-Technical Summary along with the SA Report will be issued for consultation alongside the Publication Version of the HED DPD to all key stakeholders (including statutory consultees and the public) for comment. Following the close of the consultation period, Ribble Valley Borough Council will review the feedback and revise the plan as appropriate for Submission to the Secretary of State.

If you would like to comment on the SA, please contact:

**Post:** Forward Planning, Regeneration & Housing, Ribble Valley Borough Council, Council Offices, Church Walk, Clitheroe, BB7 2RA

**Email:** [planning.policy@ribblevalley.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@ribblevalley.gov.uk)