

EAL3 Neo Map

Forward Planning
Regeneration and Housing
Ribble Valley Council Offices
Church Walk
Clitheroe
BB7 2RA

RECEIVED BY
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

- 9 JUN 2017

FAO	
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8 June 2017

To whom it may concern

Relation 19 Consultation

Potential employment allocation: Land at Higher College Farm, Hothersall [Site Option 3]

We are writing in response to the Council's Regulation 19 Housing and Economic Development DPD dated April 2017 which includes at Policy EAL3 the proposed allocation of 1.5 hectares of land for employment purposes. We understand that this forms part of an overall allocation of 4.0 hectares of employment land to meet an identified need of 2.41 hectares set out in the Core Strategy.

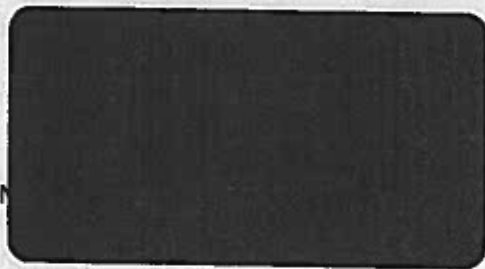
Our comments address the soundness of Policy EAL3, its justification, effectiveness and preparation.

- 1) We question the need for an allocation of employment land, in Hothersall, intended to serve the needs of the settlement of Longridge. Longridge, unlike Whalley and Clitheroe (the other two larger settlements in RVBC) straddles the boundary with Preston and so the settlement already has surplus employment land, albeit outside the RVBC boundary. There seems to be no acknowledgement of the reality on the ground in this proposal. Instead, there is a desire to make an allocation within RVBC's boundary which has little to do with the needs of the town and its people. In fact, were there to be development on this site, there is every probability that it would be redundant.
- 2) The evidence presented to justify the need for employment land to the east of Longridge seems to be an outdated Employment Land Study (2008, amended 2013) and an assertion by Longridge Town Council which appears to have had no critical evaluation. This seems wholly inadequate to justify the proposal.
- 3) The land itself is a greenfield site, outside the main settlement and surrounded by agricultural land. It forms part of the attractive rural gateway to the AONB and enhances the potential for tourism development in and around Longridge. There are several Public Footpaths, bridleways and the newly designated Longridge Cycle Loop close to the site so the construction of commercial buildings here is likely to have a detrimental impact on the amenities available to local people and the visitors who help to sustain the economic viability of Longridge.

- 4) The potential site is alongside a busy 'B' road which has several other access roads off it within a very narrow length. We understand that Lancashire County Council has serious concerns about highway safety and it is difficult to see how another entrance, with the necessary plays to serve commercial vehicles, could safely be accommodated.
- 5) There are real problems with the infrastructure serving the proposed site. To the east, commercial traffic would have to travel through the restricted area of Ribchester and use the de Tabley Bridge to access the A59. Alternatively, it would access the A59 via an ancient and narrow stone bridge over the River Hodder. To the west, in order to access the M6 southbound, traffic would have to pass through the Conservation Area around St Lawrence Church and the narrow pick-up/drop-off point for St Cecilia's School before continuing on through Grimsargh and over the narrow bridge where there is often single lane traffic. The M6 northbound would require commercial vehicles to travel through Longridge itself to reach the country lanes leading to Junction 32. It simply makes no sense to add to the congestion, to threaten the air quality, and to send heavy traffic through narrow roads never designed for them.

For these reasons, we can see no merit in the proposal.

Yours faithfully,



cc Cllr D Smith, Cllr J Rogerson, Cllr A Brown