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Date: 12 April 2019

Dear Sir or Madam

Lancashire County Council School Planning Team has received notification from Ribble Valley Borough Council of the latest Local Plan Consultation. The Regulation 22 Main Modifications HEDDPD proposes additional housing allocations to be considered in three specific locations as part of the Local Plan examination.

Education Strategy

Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 dictates that Lancashire County Council's statutory obligation is to ensure that every child living in Lancashire is able to access a mainstream school place in Lancashire. Some children have Special Educational Needs for which they access school provision outside of Lancashire. Special Educational Needs provision is managed by LCC's SEND Team and is not covered by this response. The [Strategy for the provision of school places and school's capital investment 17/18 to 19/20](#) provides the context and policy for school place provision and schools capital strategy in Lancashire. Over the coming years, Lancashire County Council and its local authority partners will need to address a range of issues around school organisation in order to maintain a coherent system that is fit for purpose, stable, and delivering the best possible outcomes for children and young people.

Pressure for additional school places can be created by an increase in the birth rate, new housing developments, greater inward migration and parental choice of one school over another. If local schools are unable to meet the demand of a new development there is the potential to have an adverse impact on the infrastructure of its local community, with children having to travel greater distances to access a school place.

In a letter from the DfE to all Chief Executives, the Minister of State for Housing and the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Schools jointly stated that 'where major new housing developments create an additional need for school places, then the local authority should expect a substantial contribution from the developer towards the cost of meeting this requirement.'

The SPT produces an [Education Contribution Methodology document](#) which outlines the Lancashire County Council methodology for assessing the likely impact of new housing developments on school places, where necessary mitigating the impact, by securing education contributions from developers.

In order to assess the impact of a development the School Planning Team consider demand for places against the capacity of primary schools within 2 miles and secondary schools within 3 miles. These distances are in line with DfE travel to school guidance and Lancashire County Councils Home to School Transport Policy.

Planning obligations will be sought for education places where Lancashire primary schools within 2 miles and/or Lancashire secondary schools within 3 miles of the development are:

- Already over-subscribed,
- Projected to become over-subscribed within 5 years, or
- A development results in demand for a school site to be provided.

Response to the consultation

The School Planning Team responded to the main modifications consultation August 2018. The information received in that consultation set out a number of additional homes in three of the district's planning areas, Clitheroe, Simonstone and Langho, in total circa 210 new dwellings across 5 sites with the main proportion planned for Clitheroe. It is noted that the number of dwellings has reduced from the previous consultation and looks to deliver circa 190 dwellings across the same sites. At the time of the response the information returned was based on the spring 2018 forecast, the current forecast spring 2019 will be used to provide an updated position.

Primary Schools

Clitheroe Town

Currently the forecast shows a shortfall of **192** assuming all of the housing in the 5 year housing land supply comes forward. Taking into account the 160 additional dwellings in the Clitheroe planning area within the consultation document, resulting in the need of **60** additional places as a worst case scenario, this indicates there to be a significant shortfall of available places in Clitheroe (**252**) over the 5 year period.

It is anticipated that a significant number of dwellings will be delivered in years 6 to 10 predominantly at Higher Standen Farm Clitheroe with a potential yield of **391** school places as a worst case scenario. Therefore the accumulative effect of the 0-5 and 6-10 years indicates a potential shortfall of 3 forms of entry (1 FE = 210 pupils). It should be noted that these figures are based on a worst case and further assessment would be required at the planning application stage.

Although a significant shortfall is projected it should be noted that a school site has been secured within section 106 agreements available for the establishment of new school at Higher Standen Farm Clitheroe to mitigate the strategic development impact. Expansion at existing schools in the Clitheroe planning area where possible would be reviewed and is a preferred option for other developments in the planning area. However, the options

at existing schools are limited and any expansion would be dependent on the following criteria;

- willingness of school governing body to expand
- planning permission & compliance with Section 77 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 and Schedule 1 to the Academies Act 2010.
- consultation with local schools and the community
- parental preference at the time that the places are required
- school standards at the time that the places are required
- suitability of site
- availability of other funding streams

Expansion at existing schools would be subject to statutory consultation process.

A potential alternative option could be to consider the provision of a larger primary school on the Higher Standen Farm strategic site. School Planning would appreciate early opportunity to discuss with Ribble Valley planning officers all options to mitigate the impact within the Clitheroe planning area.

Langho and Whalley

As reported in the 2018 response there are plans in place to increase capacity at four schools in the Langho and Whalley planning area from reception year in 2019, this includes:

Langho St Leonards – 5 per year from 2018

St Marys – 5 per year from 2019

Whalley – 5 per year from 2019

Barrow – 10 per year from 2019

It is anticipated that the above expansions will create an additional 175 places in all year groups by 2024/2025.

Simonstone

The planning area that includes Simonstone shows there to be a surplus of places and therefore the additional housing allocation does not cause any significant concern at this point.

Secondary Schools

Secondary schools unlike primary schools consider the district as a whole and not in specific planning areas. Based on figures provided, the current projected shortfall of **circa -363** and would increase by **28** from the additional allocation based on a worst case scenario places to a shortfall of **-391**.

In addition, an expansion has been approved at Ribblesdale High School and will provide an additional 150 places reducing the figure to a shortfall of 241 places. Ribblesdale School is over admitting for 2018 with permanent expansion expected to start from 2019.

However, Ribble Valley is a major importer of pupils from other areas for a number of reasons, one of the main reasons is parental choice of good or outstanding schools. Currently LCC are working with colleagues to address the geographic areas and realign the increased demand from Ribble Valley pupils, and push back pupils to schools where they live, with potential capacity within those schools in those areas, for example Hyndburn and Blackburn.

In conclusion

LCC are aware of the issues when taking in to consideration the additional dwellings proposed and their impact on the capacity across the district schools. However, School Planning are working with LCC colleagues and liaising with schools to explore and action the right measures to mitigate the impact on local schools as part of our statutory obligations.

LCC will continue to liaise with planning officers in Ribble Valley to ensure that development information received is evaluated and actioned accordingly, taking into account updated information.

Once again LCC would like to thank Ribble Valley for the opportunity to respond to the latest consultation, and the continued cooperation received.

Yours Faithfully,



Infrastructure Planning Officer

School Planning Team

Lancashire County Council