



HALLAM LAND MANAGEMENT LTD

FYLDE COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN

EXAMINATION HEARING STATEMENT

VISION, OBJECTIVES AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (MATTER 4)

ISSUES 7 AND 8

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Your Refs: Representor No 19.

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1. MATTER 4: Vision, Objectives and Development Strategy

Issue 7 – Have the vision and strategic objectives within the Plan been positively prepared; are they justified and consistent with national policy and can they realistically be achieved?

Question 26: Does the Plan set out a positive vision for the future development of the area? Are the changes proposed to the vision by the Council as additional (minor) modifications necessary for reasons of soundness?

- 1.1 We don't take issue with the vision for the area as set out by the Council or the additional modifications.
- 1.2 All we would highlight is that the 2013 Preferred Options version of the Local Plan sought to elevate Warton's status to a Key Service centre, which would provide a positive platform to create additional services in the settlement. However, we accept the vision for Warton to be a Local Service Centre is not unsound and we fully support the fact that Warton is identified as a Strategic Development Location in Chapter 6 of the Local Plan.

Question 27: Have the strategic objectives within the Plan been positively prepared and are they suitably framed? Does the addition of a further objective to strategic objective 3 as proposed by the Council as an additional (minor) modification have any implications for other parts of the Plan? Is this change necessary for reasons of soundness?

- 1.3 We don't take issue with the strategic objectives for the area as set out by the Council or the additional modifications.

Issue 8 – Does the overarching development strategy for the Plan present a positive framework which is consistent with national policy and will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development within the Borough?

Question 28: The Plan states that the development strategy locates 83.6% of housing developments within the four strategic locations over the Plan period and 9.7% in non-strategic locations.

(a) Is this strategy and the distribution of development within the Plan period justified? Are the strategic and non-strategic locations soundly based and supported by robust evidence.

- 1.4 Overall, we support the notion of the 4 key strategic development locations in Policy DLF1 and the inclusion of Warton in this list. The focus to push development towards the established urban areas within the Borough, which retain the majority of key services, employment opportunities and landscapes that can accommodate additional development without undue negative impacts, is an entirely sound strategy and we note that there is still scope to support smaller rural settlements with development based on the distribution of development.
- 1.5 With regard to Warton, it is a sizeable settlement and comprises of a large urban area (including all uses). It has a good number of key day-to day services, is well serviced by local bus services running to Preston, Lytham and Blackpool and is home to the Enterprise Zone at BAE Warton, which features strongly in the Council's Vision and Strategic Objectives for economic growth.

- 1.6 In addition, the neighbouring settlement to the east (Freckleton) is severely restricted in terms of its growth potential with Green Belt to the north and the estuary/SSSI/Ramsar site to the south. The scope for additional growth around Lytham and St Annes is also limited due to similar issues (Green Belt and seaside frontage). In light of the above circumstances, we agree that Warton has an important role to play in meeting the future needs of the Borough and should therefore feature prominently in the development strategy for growth.
- 1.7 The principal issue we take with the spatial distribution strategy is that the submitted Local Plan only provides for 840 dwellings to be attributed to Warton, which represents 10.6% of the total provision in the plan. Warton is perfectly capable of accommodating more development and this will be necessary should the Inspector consider our case on the OAN requirements for housing are correct. Indeed, as part of the 2013 Preferred Options Local Plan, Warton accommodated 17% of the houses proposed across the Borough and this was deemed to be sustainable as advised by the supported SA at the time.
- 1.8 With the recent appeal decisions approved at Warton for a further 465 dwellings (see Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 of our Matter 3 Hearing Statement), the level of development in Warton will increase to circa 1,300 dwellings, indicating that Warton's proportion of development would stand at around 15%, with these units added to the units planned for in the Submitted Local Plan.
- 1.9 We consider Warton can accommodate further development and we have indicated that there is scope for at least another 200 units on land within the control of Hallam Land Management located to the west of Warton. As previously noted, this land was identified as being a suitable development location in the 2013 Preferred Options Local Plan. Some of the additional land was also identified as being suitable in the first draft of the Brining with Warton NP (albeit the housing chapter has subsequently been deleted).

(b) Will the development strategy achieve the Council's vision and strategic objectives and deliver sustainable development for Fylde?

- 1.10 Strategic Objective 1 seeks to create sustainable communities by focusing development towards the 4 Strategic Locations so as to minimise the use of public transport. However, as highlighted under Matter 2, the Council's current strategy/justification for delivering 370 dpa is based on the premise that new jobs created in the Borough will be occupied by residents from outside of the Borough, thereby creating a position of proportional increased inward commuting. This is contrary to the assumptions used by Turley in the SHMA and is contrary to a number of other strategic objectives set out in the plan, 3f and the new objective put forward by the Council by way of minor modification.
- 1.11 In not delivering 440-450 dps, the Council's strategy will not address Strategic Objectives 3b, which seeks to meet the specific needs of all sections of the community (including affordable housing needs), or 3c that seeks to bring forward a responsive a deliverable supply of homes to meet these housing needs.

(c) Is the development strategy clearly defined within the Plan? Does Policy DLF1 clearly set out the distribution of development?

- 1.12 We consider policy DFL1 is sufficiently clear but the supporting text to the policy and Table 2: Distribution of Development to 2032 should be refined and updated in light of the latest appeal decisions applicable to Warton and on the basis that a range of 440-450 dwellings per annum should be delivered.

Question 29: Is the settlement hierarchy set out in Policy S1 justified? Does the evidence suggest that some settlements should be placed at different levels within the hierarchy? If so, what implications would this have, if any, on the development strategy?

- 1.13 In light of all considerations, we consider the settlement hierarchy is sound but cross refer to our response to Question 26 above.
- 1.14 Regarding the Fylde Settlement Hierarchy background paper we note it examines the range of services located within each of the settlements within Fylde and scores them against a number of criteria including the range of services found within each. We note the proximity to employment opportunities is not identified in the various criteria. Had this been included, it would be perfectly reasonable for Warton to have scored very highly in this category.
- 1.15 Warton is identified as a Local Service Centre on page 17 with a score of 18 compared to 39 for Kirkham and St Annes. Local Service Centres are described as providing...

'A more limited range of services to the local community, compared to Key Service Centres – they provide facilities to serve local community needs. Local Service Centres serve their own communities and those in nearby rural settlements with basic services and are well placed to provide for future local and employment needs. Good access to services is essential if rural communities are to flourish.'

- 1.16 On page 19, the document goes on to recommend the following for Warton:

"Further investment is required in Warton over the course of the plan period to 2032, to improve services to ensure that the settlement becomes a Local Service Centre through the provision of a local retail centre, including shops and community facilities. The construction of the Preston Western Distributor Road between Lea Gate and a new junction 2 onto the M55 will improve the accessibility of Warton from the motorway network and the connectivity between two locations of the AEM [BAE] Enterprise Zone at Warton in Fylde and Samlesbury in South Ribble.'

- 1.17 We support this ambition and when coupled with other material considerations (i.e. size of settlement, urban area, Green Belt, Enterprise Zone, etc), the identification of Warton as a Strategic Development Location is deemed to be sound and its current and expected role within the Plan's vision.