

**CABINET
14 DECEMBER 2011**

AGENDA ITEM 4(b)

**Summary of comments from Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Planning Committee
held on 8 December 2011**

Comment	View of the Borough Planner
The Plan offers reasonable options in relation to affordable housing, Edge Hill University and Public Transport	Noted
Policy EN3 - That the designation of Elm Place as a Childrens' Play area be removed	The site has been allocated as a proposed play area since 1987 in the Ormskirk Burscough & Aughton Local Plan and has never attracted objections from local residents. It would be better to consult on the designation and then form a view after that process.
Policy SP1 - needs stronger wording to prevent development in high flood risk areas	The policy wording on flood risk in SP1 is consistent with national planning policy on development in areas at risk of flooding. The only way to make the wording stronger would be to state that all development in areas of flood risk will be refused planning permission, but this would be contrary to national planning policy and therefore considered unsound by a Planning Inspector.
Policy EC4 - The policy needs to be strengthened to ensure the production of a Masterplan for the Edge Hill campus and the monitoring of any travel plan. Concern also expressed that insufficient consideration has been given to a twin site campus.	Policy EC4 already requires a masterplanned approach and the preparation of a Travel Plan for any new development to extend the Edge Hill Campus – whether a development proposal fulfils these criteria would be part of any monitoring of this policy. Consideration has been given to a multi-campus approach and this should be recorded under the “Other Alternatives Considered” section. The section will be amended to include this.

Comment	View of the Borough Planner
<p>Policy RS2 - The policy should be reviewed with a view to raising the lower threshold for the provision of affordable housing.</p>	<p>The affordable housing threshold (i.e. the minimum number of residential units for which an element of affordable housing would be required by policy) was set taking into account the findings of a comprehensive Viability Study undertaken for the Council by Fordham Research in 2009/10. This study, carried out during the current difficult economic conditions, concluded that a threshold as low as three dwellings could be set across the Borough (with the exception of Skelmersdale), along with an affordable housing requirement of 35%, and that this would be viable.</p> <p>In preparing the Preferred Options Core Strategy, Council officers sought to strike a balance between encouraging housing development in the Borough by lessening the burden on smaller developers, and procuring as many affordable housing units as possible. Officers decided not to set a threshold as low as three dwellings, but to increase this to 5, with a corresponding affordable housing requirement of 20% for developments of 5-7 units. However, on the advice of Members, the minimum affordable housing threshold was raised further, to 8, in the Core Strategy Preferred Options document.</p> <p>In addition to setting a higher threshold than was recommended in the Affordable Housing Viability Study, the draft affordable housing policy also allows for lower percentages of affordable housing to be provided, if it can be demonstrated that to meet the policy's requirements would make a scheme unviable.</p> <p>Ultimately, by raising the threshold, the opportunity to obtain affordable housing is missed for all developments below that threshold and, given the well documented need for affordable housing in the Borough, it is officers' view that the threshold should not be raised any higher than 8 units.</p>
<p>Policy IF1 - should take account of local West Lancashire need rather than need from neighbouring Boroughs.</p>	<p>This comment was related to the first paragraph of Policy IF1 and the issue of out-of-centre retail development. It is suggested that referring to a “specific local need” (rather than just a “specific need” as is currently in the policy) would be appropriate. To refer to a “specific West Lancashire need” would not be in line with national policy as we must take account of cross-boundary interaction.</p>
<p>Consultation forum events be held for at least 2 ½ hours to enable general discussion of the whole area of the plan to take place and an additional event be held in Up Holland.</p>	<p>There will be both an exhibition and forum event in Skelmersdale which can be attended by Up Holland residents. This will allow for a more rounded discussion on possible housing and employment sites across the Skelmersdale and Up Holland areas.</p>

Comment	View of the Borough Planner
Joint working relationships with infrastructure providers needs strengthening to ensure the provision of infrastructure that is essential for the delivery of development aspirations	The Infrastructure Delivery Plan demonstrates the high standard of work that has been undertaken to develop and strengthen working relationships with infrastructure providers. At this point in time there is nothing further the Council can do to require infrastructure providers to deliver the infrastructure required to meet development aspirations.

Proposed Officer Changes in light of comments received from Members directly, Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Planning Committee and interested parties

Policy / Para	Page No.	Suggested Amendment	Reason
1.23 (Fig 1.2)	11	Map to be made more legible	Map and Key is currently too small to read easily
2.3	13	And the small market town of Burscough.	Burscough is not a market town
2.8	16include Beacon Country Park in Up Holland Skelmersdale ,	Beacon Park is largely within Skelmersdale wards
2.8	16	... and some of the key heritage assets include the Grade I listed buildings of Scarisbrick Hall, Rufford Old Hall, Church of St Michael in Aughton and St Cuthbert Church in Halsall and the Grade I listed remains of Burscough Priory.	Factual clarity
2.22	20	... in addition to important local employers such as the Council, Lancashire County Council and Central Lancashire Primary Care Trust.	LCC is a major employer
2.26	21	Skelmersdale's New Town status has brought mixed fortunes to the town. In addition, the new town housing estates, several of which have Radburn layouts, have left a legacy of varying quality housing and poorly designed estates, where pedestrians are segregated from the road system through a network of footpaths, underpasses and footbridges which many people do not feel comfortable using due to the perceived risks of crime. The town suffers from a poor image.	To improve the wording
2.41	23	...several small villages and hamlets within the rural parishes such as Lathom, as well as ...	To improve the description
Table 2.1	25	“Specialist Needs Housing” ... and those with disabilities or special needs (as well as those that care for them).	To make reference to the needs of carers for specialist housing

Policy / Para	Page No.	Suggested Amendment	Reason
SP2	49	<p>2(ii) A new supermarket either close to or integrated with the Concourse centre, or, alternatively, close to the new high street. Should the supermarket be adjacent to the high street an active retail frontage should be maintained. and the Any supermarket proposal should form part of an integrated regeneration scheme, and facilitate the delivery of, to deliver an improved retail and leisure offer for the town centre, linking the Concourse and the Asda / College.</p> <p>2(iv) The Firbeck estate should be improved through the redevelopment or remodelling ...</p>	To improve the policy wording
SP2	50	<p>New Paragraph at end of policy SP2:</p> <p>Development which would prejudice the delivery of any aspect of the Town Centre regeneration scheme, either in terms of its location or the viability of other elements of the scheme, will not be permitted.</p>	To improve the policy wording
4.45	51	<p>Remove last bullet point from paragraph 4.45 and amend and add the following to the end of paragraph 4.43 as follows:</p> <p>"The Firbeck Estate will need to be regenerated through environmental initiatives and improving the housing stock either through redevelopment, or remodelling if widespread demolition is shown to not be viable. Appropriate links will need to be made with the adjacent Findon site to ensure that the sites are integrated."</p>	To improve the policy wording
GN3, part 4	69	<p>Add following text to part 4 of Policy GN3:</p> <p>4. Drainage / Sewerage</p> <p>i. It incorporates sustainable drainage systems where feasible, or, where this is not feasible, incorporates features to reduce the amount of surface water run-off by minimising hard surfaces and using porous materials where possible;</p> <p>ii. On previously developed land, a reduction in surface water run-off of at least 30% will be sought, rising to a minimum of 50% in critical drainage areas;</p> <p>iii. It is designed to prevent sewerage problems.</p>	To strengthen requirements for managing surface water run-off on previously developed sites

Policy / Para	Page No.	Suggested Amendment	Reason
After 6.60	95	<p>Add in second alternative option considered:</p> <p><u>Alternative Option 2: Consideration of a multi-campus option, for example having a satellite campus in Skelmersdale.</u></p> <p><u>Reason for Rejection: The University, although it does have small satellite campuses for very specific courses that need to be located off the main campus, does not believe a more general multi-campus policy will provide an attractive learning environment to encourage students to select Edge Hill as their University of choice and the costs of a multi-campus policy would be much higher than a single campus policy. In relation to Skelmersdale specifically, feedback from existing students to the University has suggested that a campus in Skelmersdale would not be popular and therefore may deter potential students from selecting Edge Hill.</u></p>	To clarify that a multi-campus option for this policy was considered
7.21 (4 th bullet)	102	<p>There should be Changes to Green Belt policy to allow barn conversions <u>to residential</u> and live-work units were recommended.</p>	For clarity
7.45	108	<p>However, a new 'affordable rent' tenure was introduced by central government in Spring 2011, whereby rents are set at <u>up to</u> 80% of the market rent for the locality.</p>	For clarity
Policy IF1, 1 st para	125	<p>Retail and other uses normally associated with town centres will be resisted in out-of-centre locations unless a specific <u>local</u> need is proven for the proposed development and there is no suitable site within a town or local centre.</p>	To be clear that it should meet a local need
Policy IF2, Part 1(b)	134	<p>Add the following text at the end of Part 1(b) of Policy IF2:</p> <p><u>xiii) the proposed Green Lane Link Road in Tarleton.</u></p>	To add a reference regarding the Green Lane Link Road proposal

Policy / Para	Page No.	Suggested Amendment	Reason
8.44	139/140	<p>... These changes include not reducing the setting the car parking standards for Higher and Further Education Establishments requirements in Accessibility Areas B and C from at 1 space per 1015 students, (as recommended in the submitted draft for the partial review) to 1 space per 10 students as this Council proposed for the submitted draft of the RSS Partial Review at the time. In addition, parking standards were added for off-campus University halls of residence and purpose-built student accommodation. Given the presence of Edge Hill University, a specific criterion was felt necessary to cater for its this needs.</p>	Correction so that consistent with Appendix F and to remove potential for double-counting of car parking on-campus
8.60 / 8.61	141/142	<p>Paragraph 8.60 - Remove "Although this approach ... of other authorities," from end of paragraph and add to start of 8.61 after 'Reason for Rejection'. Paragraph 8.61 to now read as follows:</p> <p><i>"Reason for rejection: Although this approach does have some merit, providing clear coherent guidance which would be consistent with that of other authorities, it would not....."</i></p>	To correct an error
App. F (Class C2)	246/247	<p>Amend wording to read</p> <p>"University Halls of Residence and purpose built student accommodation (off-campus)"</p>	To ensure this applies to all student accommodation and only off-campus