

# South Ribble Site Allocations Development Plan Document Submission

## Supporting Statement – Employment Land

### Introduction

Central Lancashire Core Strategy Policy 9 – Economic Growth and Employment, sets out a requirement of 62 hectares of employment land for South Ribble over the plan period. It states an allowance for losses of 35 hectares and an additional provision to 2026 of 27 hectares, which totals 62 additional hectares of additional employment land in the Borough over the plan period. The Inspectors report that was prepared for the Core Strategy also highlighted the importance of the 35 hectares allowance for losses.

It is important to note that there are two strategic employment sites - Cuerden and BAE Samlesbury located within the borough. The location of these sites takes the boroughs total requirement of additional employment land over the figure (62ha) as stated in the Core Strategy.

Cuerden and BAE Samlesbury are sites that are capable of stimulating economic growth for South Ribble, Central Lancashire and on a national scale. The sites have the potential to attract significant inward investment and high quality employment opportunities, further to this BAE Samlesbury will attract investment on an international scale due to its specialised activities.

The two sites total 118 hectares of employment land as shown in the table below -

<b>Strategic Site</b>	<b>Size hectares</b>
Cuerden	65
BAE Samlesbury - EZ	53
<b>Total</b>	<b>118</b>

However even in light of this oversupply, it is still important that the Council provides opportunities for smaller local business to establish, aswell as giving the opportunity for existing businesses to expand on to sites that are allocated within the borough.

The Council has a duty to ensure that there is the right type and number of jobs, that people have the skills to fulfil those jobs and importantly there are the opportunities to facilitate this by ensuring the appropriate amount of land for different types of employment uses is made available within varying locations in the borough through allocated appropriate land.

### Background

Through the process of producing the Site Allocations Document a key issue to address was the Enterprise Zone status which was achieved at the BAE Samlesbury strategic site in autumn 2011. This meant that further land was to be released to allow this site to expand in line with its Enterprise Zone status, this then added to the

oversupply of employment land within the borough being proposed in the Site Allocations DPD.

At the Preferred Options stage consultation of the Site Allocations DPD there were various issues raised with regard to the amount of employment land proposed in the document. These included objections from The South Leyland Residents Action Group who objected to the proposed employment land allocated off Emnie Lane / Leyland Lane (Site b). Concerns included noise pollution, safety issues, congestion and loss of the openness of the area, its relation to the proposed residential site (site P) which sits adjacent to the site and the sufficient supply of employment land located nearby.

Other comments at the Preferred Options stage were from local residents in Bamber Bridge objecting to the proposed employment allocation at Kellet Lane (shown as Site c on the Preferred Options proposal map), their reasons were due to the open space that is currently on that site and the houses that look on to this area, they also stated that there was sufficient employment land nearby.

On the basis of these key issues and the comments raised at the Preferred Options stage it was considered appropriate to revisit the employment element of the document including policy and the employment allocations as proposed in the Preferred Options document, and consequently changes were made at Publication stage.

### **Outcome**

As stated above the Central Lancashire Core Strategy sets out a requirement of 62 hectares of employment land for South Ribble over the plan period. However due to the location of 2 strategic employment sites within the borough this requirement is superseded.

The Council concluded that a pragmatic way forward would be that the figure (62 hectares) was to be made up of 35.4 hectares of land (as set out in the table within Policy E1) of the Publication Version Site Allocations DPD) to provide for local employment needs and an element/portion of the 2 strategic sites (Cuerden and BAE Samlesbury) would make up the additional 26.6 hectares. This then gives a wide range of employment opportunities from high tech jobs to low skilled jobs being made available throughout the borough.

(It is worth noting that the proposed changes that were made in Policy E1 – Allocation of Employment Land, from the Preferred Options stage to Publication stage document included the removal of South Rings, Kellet Lane and Emnie Lane, which reduced the overall allocation of local employment land from 67.3 hectares to 35.4 hectares.)

As the Council are proposing to use 26.6 hectares of the strategic sites allocations, there is then a remaining 91.4 hectares of this allocation. This would contribute towards the employment land supply for Central Lancashire as a whole and the North West Region. Importantly it was the Government's intention that the Enterprise Zone would also contribute nationally and internationally to employment needs and

demands, meaning that sub regionally, regionally, nationally and even internationally there are the opportunities for people to work at these 2 strategic sites.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion the Council has addressed the issues that were raised during consultation processes, the further allocation at BAE Samlesbury due to the Enterprise Zone and the location of the Cuerden site within the Borough.

The Council believe that even with the oversupply of employment land, the method used to allocate employment land within the DPD takes a pragmatic view to having 2 strategic employment sites located within the borough, whilst ensuring appropriate local job opportunities are made available.