

**South Ribble Site Allocations and Development Management
Policies Development Plan Document**

**Submissions for South Ribble Examination,
Sites & Development Management Policies.**

*Representation from Mrs. Eileen Melling, 5 Chapel Meadow Longton, PR4 5NR.
Representation number 600. 19.02.13*

The NPPF states that to, “achieve sustainable development” there are three areas which should be considered equally; economic, environmental and social. The NPPF focuses on economic development thus favouring the developers and therefore opening up the opportunities to build on every available piece of land on a huge scale. I am greatly concerned and believe that recent and speculative planning applications have been based on this.

Paragraph 9 which refers to “...pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment” and which includes “moving from a net loss of bio-diversity to achieving net gains for nature...” can only be achieved by ensuring that protected species such as EU protected bats and great crested newts; UK Species of Principal Importance (animals including barn owls & water voles; insects; invertebrates; flora & fauna), UK Bio-Diversity Action species, such as hedgehogs, which are now in serious decline, comply with wildlife legislation, for example, the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) as amended, Hedgerow Regulations (1997), and the Conservation (Natural Habitats etc) Regulations 1994. Central Lancashire Core Strategy Policy 22 (Biodiversity) is also applicable. According to the Natural Environment & Rural Communities’ Act (NERC 2006) there is an obligation upon planning authorities to ensure that comprehensive ecological surveys are completed and recommendations implemented by developers. An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the proposed development ensures that a decision is made in full knowledge of any likely significant effects on the natural environment.

Site Q was a natural haven for wildlife having been allowed to grow wild for over 20 years, there were barn owls and bats in this area, but several months ago was ‘cleared’ removing all bushes, shrubs & trees (despite the fact that wildlife legislation and planning guidance on ecological matters indicate that surveys must be done & mitigating measures undertaken). It would appear that the Planning Authority had no control over this inappropriate action, but it should be incumbent upon the Planning Authority to protect land from such ‘clearance’ until planning permission is given following LDF ‘adoption’. This will help to ensure that protected species remain undisturbed on the habitat until detailed comprehensive ecological reports with appropriate surveys are undertaken just prior to development.

Sites M, Q and X in Longton. These are all ‘Greenfield’ sites as are many of the suggested sites in the LDF. Paragraph 9 of the NPPF “pursuing sustainable development” includes “moving from a net loss of bio-diversity to achieving net gains for nature”. This must be achieved through

implementation of all wildlife legislation and ensuring developer compliance of this through the Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act (2006). I therefore support additional measures agreed by Lancashire Wildlife Trust and the Planning Authority to give conservation and ecology greater weight in the LDF.

One of the 12 core planning principles of the NPPF is to “encourage effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed” (Brownfield land). Unfortunately many of the proposed sites are ‘Greenfield’ sites even though there are ‘Brownfield’ sites available in the area, such as the AMS Trading Estate and the Industrial Estate at Much Hoole, both sites having been proposed for building land recently. The addition of the availability of these sites should negate the need to build on the “Greenfield” sites making them redundant, unnecessary and in breach of the NPPFs three areas of “economic, environmental and social”. It is more appropriate to develop from a ‘Brownfield site in compliance with the NPPF than to turn over a green field for development where “moving from a net loss of bio-diversity to achieving net gains for nature” is difficult. It is imperative that an Environmental Impact Assessment of any proposed development is carried out so that decisions are made in the full knowledge of any likely significant effects on the natural environment.

Traffic and Infrastructure in Longton. Traffic is very heavy in the Longton area particularly in the area of Chapel Lane and Chapel Park Road (A59 Underpass). Traffic moves very quickly both travelling on the underpass and coming off the dual carriageway on to Chapel Lane which is made hazardous by repeated chicanes, parked cars and school traffic. Traffic on the underpass is exacerbated by traffic coming from Chapel Meadow and the close opposite on Chapel Park Road. The addition of yet another road exit from the proposed development on Site Q will overwhelm the already heavy traffic in this area and increase the proximity and number of hazardous junctions close to a blind bend making this already dangerous piece of road a potentially lethal accident spot.

The infrastructure in Longton is already close to breaking point with overcrowded schools and oversubscribed doctors and dentists. The electricity supply frequently fails due to old cabling and the water pressure is weak. The addition of all the increased housing proposed for this area will render these services unable to cope.

The Overall effect of the Localism Act, which was enacted in November 2011, states on page 18 in “Reform to make the planning system clearer, more democratic and more effective”, the Act “places significantly more influence in the hands of local people over issues that make a big difference to their lives” and on page 19 “enables local authorities to make their own decisions to adapt housing provision to local needs and make the system fairer and more effective. This is, in sum, an Act with the potential to effect a significant change in national life giving people the opportunity to take control of decisions that matter to them”.

The decision to build in the Longton area is a decision which matters to us. Do we really have the opportunity to take control of the decision or will building go ahead in this area regardless of what we want?

6.3.15

“The Plan must be legally compliant, justified, effective, consistent with national policy”

For the above reasons I do not believe the plan to be legally compliant, justified, effective or consistent with national policy. I do not believe that it is the most appropriate in the circumstances, or that other relevant alternatives have been considered.