

STRIDE TREGLOWN



Environmental Statement: Chapter 5 – Planning Policy Context

Ellel Holiday Village, Lancaster

Ellel

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5. Planning Policy Context

5.1.1 This section considers the planning policy framework relevant to the determination of a planning application and the context within the assessment work is undertaken.

5.2. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2019)

5.2.1 The current iteration of the Framework continues to place the requirement to achieve sustainable development at the heart of the planning system. This means achieving three ‘overarching objectives’: economic, social and environmental.

5.2.2 Paragraph 10 confirms that there is a firm presumption in favour of sustainable development.

- This principle is enshrined within Paragraph 11, which for decision-taking means:
- Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date Development Plan without delay; or
- Where there are no relevant Development Plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, grant planning permission unless:
- Policies in the Framework for the protection of areas or assets provide clear reason for refusal; or

5.2.3 Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

5.2.4 Where Paragraph 11 d.) 1. refers to policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets, these are defined in Footnote 6 as: habitat sites and/or designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Green Belt, local green space, AONBs, a national park or a defined heritage coast, irreplaceable habitats, designated heritage assets and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.

5.2.5 Paragraph 12 confirms that the statutory status of the Development Plan takes primacy in the decision-making process and accepts that Local Planning Authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date Development Plan, but ‘only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the Plan should not be followed’.

5.2.6 Chapter 4 of the Framework relates to decision-making and requires Local Planning Authorities to approach decisions in a ‘positive and creative way’; it states that decision-makers at every level should seek, where possible, to approve applications for sustainable development.

5.2.7 Paragraph 39 encourages early engagement between all parties to ensure that good-quality pre-application discussions result in improved outcomes for the community. It encourages the resolution of matters at pre-application stage including with statutory planning consultees, which should ensure that Local Planning Authorities are able to issue timely decisions ‘helping to ensure that applicants do not experience unnecessary delays and costs’.

5.2.8 Paragraph 43 urges applicants to discuss with Local Planning Authorities as early in the process as possible whether formal assessments such as Environmental Impact Assessments or Habitat Regulations Assessments are required.

- 5.2.9 Chapter 6 sets out policies that seek to ensure a strong and competitive economy, and Paragraph 8 in particular states that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and the wider opportunities for development. Paragraph 83 sets out the ambition of supporting a prosperous rural economy and states that policies and decisions should enable (inter alia) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside, whilst it also recognises the need to retain and develop accessible local services and community facilities.
- 5.2.10 Paragraph 84 recognises that sites to meet such local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements and in locations that are not well served by public transport. Where this is the case, it seeks to ensure that developments do not have an unacceptable impact on local roads, and that opportunities are exploited to make locations more sustainable, 'for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by bicycle or by public transport'.
- 5.2.11 Chapter 7 seeks to ensure the vitality of town centres and advocates a sequential approach to the delivery of retail, leisure, office and other main town-centre uses, and only where sites are not available for such uses should edge-of-centre sites be considered and then other accessible locations that are well connected to the town centre. Paragraph 87 requires applicants and Local Planning Authorities to demonstrate flexibility on issues such as form and scale, so that opportunities to utilise town-centre or edge-of-centre sites are fully explored.
- 5.2.12 Paragraph 89 requires that where applications for retail and leisure developments outside of town centres are proposed and are not in accordance with an up-to-date plan, there is a requirement for an impact assessment (subject to locally set thresholds for gross floor space). Such assessments should include:
- The impact of the proposal on existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a centre or centres in the catchment area of the proposal; and
 - The impact of the proposal on town centre viability and vitality, including local consumer choice and trade in the town centre and the wider retail catchment.
- 5.2.13 Failure to satisfy the sequential test or demonstration of significant adverse impact will result in an application being refused.
- 5.2.14 Chapter 8 of the Framework sets out how land-use planning can contribute towards healthy and safer communities. It encourages policies which seek to promote social interaction, provide safe and accessible environments, and enable and support healthy lifestyles. It encourages the provision of social, recreational and cultural facilities, and the services which local people need, through providing shared spaces, community facilities and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities.
- 5.2.15 Paragraph 96 emphasises the need for people to have access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity, given its importance for their health and wellbeing of communities.
- 5.2.16 Paragraph 98 seeks to protect and enhance public rights of way and access to the countryside, for example by adding links to the existing rights of way network including national trails.
- 5.2.17 Chapter 9 seeks to promote sustainable transport and confirms the planning system should actively manage patterns of growth and support existing transport networks and promoting walking, cycling and public transport. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. Importantly, Paragraph 103 states that 'opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making'.

- 5.2.18 Paragraph 108 requires local authorities, when considering planning applications, to ensure that appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be, or have been, taken up; safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users; and any significant impacts from the development on the transport network or on highway safety can be cost-effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.
- 5.2.19 Paragraph 109 reaffirms the presumption in favour of sustainable development and requires that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impact on the road network would be 'severe'.
- 5.2.20 All applications should give first priority to pedestrian and cycle movement, and facilitate access to high-quality public transport with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services. They should also address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility. They should create places that are safe, secure and attractive, and allow for efficient delivery of goods and services whilst also enabling charging of plug-in and other ultra-low-emission vehicles.
- 5.2.21 Paragraph 111 states that all development that generates significant amounts of movement should require a travel plan and be subject to a transport statement or assessment. Chapter 12 relates to design and confirms that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creating better places in which to live and work, and helping make development acceptable to communities. It encourages early discussion between the applicants and the Local Planning Authority as well as local communities about the design and style of emerging schemes. It warns that planning permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area.
- 5.2.22 Paragraph 131 states that in determining applications, 'great weight' should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability and help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, as long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of the surroundings.
- 5.2.23 Chapter 14 relates to climate change, flooding and coastal change, and requires that new development should be planned in ways that avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. Where new development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure that risk can be managed. It also requires that such developments can help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, for example through its location, orientation and design.
- 5.2.24 Paragraph 151 aims to increase the use and supply of renewable and low-carbon energy and heat, and requires relevant policies in local plans to promote sustainable sources of energy.
- 5.2.25 The chapter also provides considerable guidance on flood risk and confirms that a sequential risk-based approach to the location of new development should be taken into account both at plan stage and decision-making stage.
- 5.2.26 Chapter 15 relates to the conserving and enhancing of the natural environment and places emphasis on protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, minimising impacts on and improving net gains for biodiversity, preventing new and existing development from contributing to unacceptable levels of pollution, and remediating and mitigating derelict and contaminated land.
- 5.2.27 Paragraph 172 places great weight upon the need to conserve and enhance landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It urges that new developments within these areas should be of a modest scale unless there are exceptional circumstances.

- 5.2.28 When determining planning applications local authorities should consider if significant harm to biodiversity can be avoided, mitigated or compensated for. Paragraph 175 requires that development that results in loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, such as ancient woodland, should be refused unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and suitable compensation.
- 5.2.29 Paragraph 177 confirms that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the project is likely to have significant effect on the site of a habitat.
- 5.2.30 Chapter 16 relates to conserving and enhancing the historic environment, and considers policies for proposals affecting heritage assets. Applicants need to describe the significance of any heritage asset and should take into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of such assets and putting them to viable uses, consistent with their conservation; the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities; and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 5.2.31 In considering the potential impacts of new development, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation and any harm to, or loss of, the significance of the designated heritage asset will require clear and convincing justification. Paragraph 195 states that where development will lead to substantial harm (or total loss), local authorities should normally refuse consent unless exceptional circumstances apply.
- 5.2.32 Paragraph 196 states that where development will lead to less than substantial harm, this harm shall be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including securing its optimum viable use.

5.3. Development Plan

- 5.3.1 It is a statutory requirement of planning law at Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.3.2 Provision is included within Article 32 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedures) (England) Order 2015 for a planning authority to depart from Development Plan policy where material considerations indicate that the Plan should not be followed. This is subject to conditions prescribed by direction of the Secretary of State, and subject to advertisement of the departure.
- 5.3.3 On 29th July 2020, Lancaster City Council adopted both the Local Plan Part 1 (Strategic Policies and Land Allocations DPD) as well as Part 2 (Review of the Development Management DPD). This means that the residual saved policies of the Lancaster and District Local Plan (2004) and the Lancaster District Core Strategy (2008) are now out of date and can be set aside for the purposes of decision-making.
- 5.3.4 Given the contemporary nature of both parts of the new Local Plan, and in particular their consistency with the National Planning Policy Framework, they can be afforded full weight in the determination of planning applications.

Lancaster Local Plan Part 1: Strategic Policies and Land Allocations DPD

- 5.3.5 The document sets out a spatial vision and plan for the future of the district for the period 2011 to 2031. The spatial vision for Lancaster District 2031 includes a number of aspirations which the local authority wishes to see delivered by the end of the life of the Local Plan. These include, inter alia:
- To maintain and enhance the district's role within the wider sub-region of Lancashire and Cumbria in terms of delivering the right levels of growth in the right places at the right time;
 - To welcome and retain investment, residents, students and talented employers in order to achieve a well-educated, well-employed, well-housed population;

- To balance support for growth and diversity in distinctive local businesses whilst minimising the need to commute;
- A desire that the district's unique nature and historic environment will be protected and/or enhanced to maintain a distinct sense of place and that designated landscapes, townscapes and important habitats and wildlife will be conserved;
- To meet the movement needs of a growing population and to increase visitor numbers and expanding businesses, making a better range of sustainable efficient multi-modal transport options;
- The district will be recognised as an excellent environment for growing business; and
- To give existing and future residents a quality of life enhanced by excellent leisure and cultural opportunities. Within the coast and countryside area the objective is to conserve and enhance environments with a more diverse network of vibrant rural communities acting as hubs for services and businesses that provide for local needs and directly support farming, forestry and fisheries.

5.3.6 The plan is built upon five overriding objectives which are as follows:

- Delivery of a thriving local economy that fosters investment and growth and supports the opportunities to deliver the economic potential of the district;
- Provision of a sufficient supply, quality and mix of housing to meet the changing needs of the population and support growth and investment;
- Protect and enhance the natural, historic and built environment of the district;
- Provision of necessary infrastructure required to support both new and existing development and the creation of sustainable communities;
- Delivery of a safe and sustainable transport network that improves both connection within and out of the district, reducing the need to travel, and encouraging more sustainable forms of transport.

5.3.7 **Policy SP1** sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development which reflects the Framework.

5.3.8 **Policy SP2** sets out the settlement hierarchy for the district, from Lancaster as a regional centre down to rural villages where development that meets local needs will be accommodated.

5.3.9 **Policy SP3** sets out the development strategy for the district, focusing the majority of development towards the main urban areas of Lancaster, Morecambe, Heysham and Carnforth, and to supplement this approach with a range of strategic greenfield sites, including Lancaster South. A modest level of development will be permitted in rural settlements and overall the strategy will seek to provide development opportunities for economic, social and environmental wellbeing and needs of future generations.

5.3.10 **Policy SP4** sets out the priorities for sustainable economic growth and places at the heart of it the promotion of the Bailrigg Garden Village within the Lancaster South growth area. It also seeks to prioritise the growth of the retail and cultural offers for Lancaster and Morecambe to enhance the quantitative and qualitative offers within these respective city and town centres. It recognises the need to improve retail, leisure and cultural heritage offers that link to the enhancement of the wider cultural heritage such as Lancaster Castle, the Canal Quarter and Morecambe seafront, to the benefit of both residents and visitors. Amongst the other priorities it seeks to support sustainable economic growth in the rural economy and to support the delivery of a skilled workforce.

- 5.3.11 **Policy SP5** promotes positive economic growth and the delivery of new jobs; identifying a number of growth locations or expanded employment allocations including a Junction 33 agri-business centre at Galgate. In total 59.5 hectares of employment land are allocated across the Local Plan.
- 5.3.12 **Policy SP7** seeks to maintain Lancaster District's unique heritage and lists a number of designated heritage assets that will be protected. The Council will explore opportunities to maximise wider public benefits that reinforce Lancaster's unique identity through the promotion, understanding, interpretation and enjoyment of the district's historic environment.
- 5.3.13 **Policy SP8** similarly seeks to protect the natural environment and recognises the potential effects of climate change, in particular the associated risks from extreme weather events and increased levels of rainfall. All developments will be expected to protect, maintain and enhance the district's biodiversity and geo-diversity through the appropriate location of uses, sympathetic design, sustainable construction techniques and the appropriate mitigation measures. The Council will also support opportunities to maximise energy efficiency.
- 5.3.14 **Policy SP9** relates to strong and vibrant communities and requires that new development should deliver safe, cohesive and healthy communities which benefit from quality homes, good accessibility, open spaces and recreational provision, and promotes the role of sustainable transport, particularly cycling and walking.
- 5.3.15 **Policy SP10** relates to the improvement of transport infrastructure and requires new development to be sited in sustainable locations that ensure a range of transport options are available. It also states that where appropriate and necessary, proposals will be expected to contribute to the delivery of important transport infrastructure.
- 5.3.16 **Policy SG3** relates to infrastructure delivery for growth in South Lancaster. It expects all development contained within the designation of the broad location for growth to contribute to infrastructure requirements in a fair and equal manner, and would prevent piecemeal development in the area which does not address strategic infrastructure matters. The principal strategic improvement required is a reconfiguration of Junction 33 of the M6 as well as local road improvements and the provision of additional public transport infrastructure such as the creation of a bus rapid transit system linking South Lancaster to the city centre and beyond. It also promotes the creation of a cycling and walking 'superhighway' from Galgate to the city centre, as well as improvements to walking and cycling links along the Lancaster canal.
- 5.3.17 **Policy EN2** seeks to control development within the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty of which there are two within the district, including the Forest of Bowland AONB. It requires any development within the AONBs to be consistent with the relevant management plan.
- 5.3.18 **Policy EN3** relates to the open countryside and requires that any development proposals should have due regard to all relevant policies contained within the Local Plan, particularly in relation to development management.
- 5.3.19 **Policy EN9** identifies Galgate as one of three air-quality management areas (AQMAs) within the district. It requires that developments located within or adjacent to AQMAs are expected to ensure they do not contribute to increasing levels of air pollutants.
- 5.3.20 **Policy SC1** identifies a number of neighbourhood planning areas, and whilst it notes that Dolphinholme Neighbourhood Plan will be prepared by Ellel Parish Council, there is no neighbourhood plan that covers the application site.
- 5.3.21 **Policy T1** relates to park and ride facilities within Lancaster. It not only protects the land at Junction 34 where the existing park and ride is situated, but also proposes future investigation for the role of a Lancaster South park and ride close to Junction 33. This is shown on the proposals map extract below.

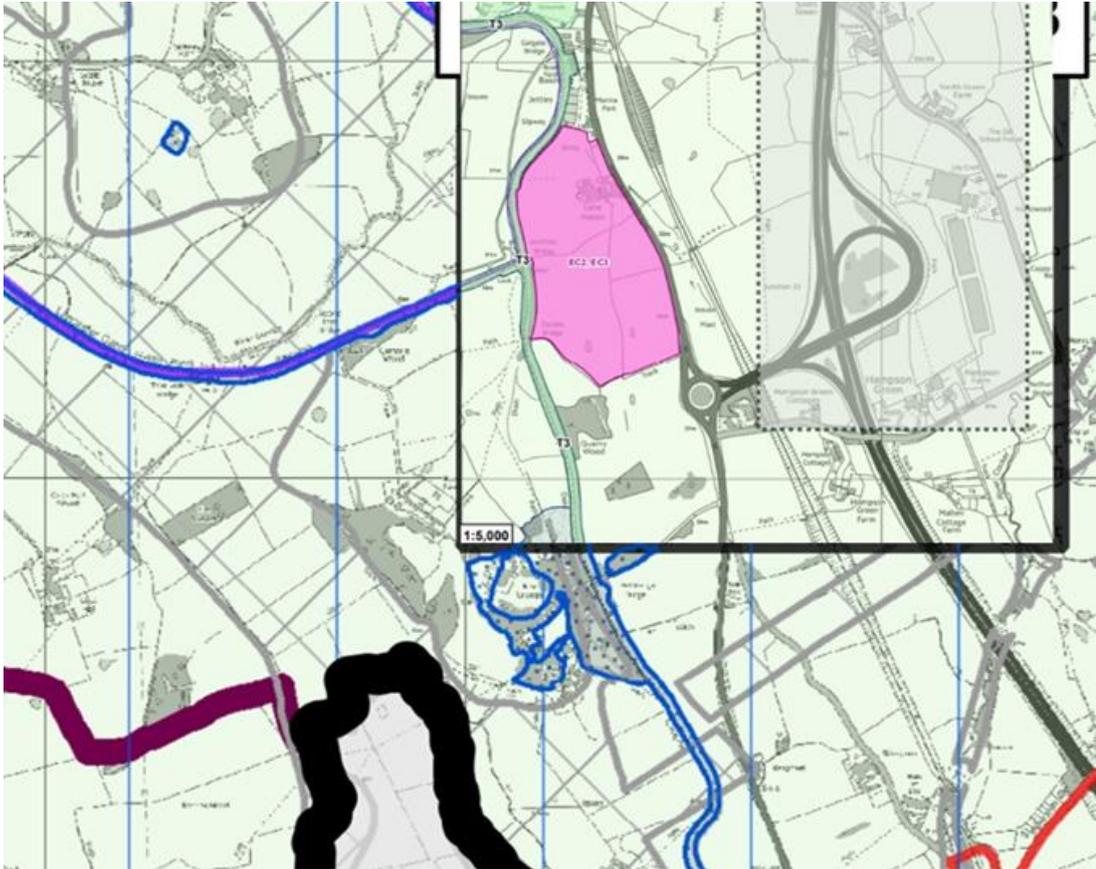


Figure 5.1: Part 1 Proposals Map extract showing location of application site

- 5.3.22 **Policy T2** seeks to promote cycling and walking in the district, building on previous successes as a cycling demonstration town. The cycling network is shown on the policies map and the Council seeks a number of improvements to the network and the extension or improvement of several routes. It particularly notes the need to make provision for a cycling/walking superhighway between Bailrigg Garden Village / Lancaster South growth area, and the city centre.
- 5.3.23 **Policy T3** recognises the importance of the Lancaster canal and requires that developments adjacent to or adjoining the canal will be subject to a number of criteria to ensure they are integrated with the canal, e.g. optimising views to and from the waterway and conserving the distinctive industrial heritage of the canal and its assets.

Lancaster Local Plan – Part 2: Review of the Development Management DPD

This document is the second edition of the Development Management DPD and will replace the policies within the former Lancaster District Core Strategy, the 2014 Development Management DPD and any saved policies left over from the 2004 Local Plan. All three of these documents have now been formally withdrawn.

- 5.3.24 The following policies are considered relevant to the determination of this planning application.
- 5.3.25 **Policy DM14** relates to proposals involving employment land and premises and prioritises their development on allocated employment sites, but where this is not practical or achievable, locating them within or connected to main urban areas or sustainable settlements is preferred. It supports employment-generating uses and development that make the best use of previously developed land or buildings subject to a number of criteria, and requires that employment uses within rural areas would be expected to comply with Policies DM 44, DM 46, DM 47 and DM 48 of the document. It also requires that some proposals, because of their nature and scale, may require a travel plan.

- 5.3.26 **Policy DM15** supports small-business generation. The creation or expansion of small businesses within the district is encouraged, provided it meets three criteria, namely: location within the built-up areas or sustainable settlements, allocated employment sites, or as part of farm diversification; the proposal is a sustainable expansion of an existing business within its existing site; and the proposal is for the conversion or re-use of suitable existing buildings. The policy also seeks to support the role of home working within the economy through provision of improved telecommunications infrastructure and considering positively small-scale extensions to dwellings.
- 5.3.27 **Policy DM16** relates to town centre uses and adopts a sequential approach to such development. The second part of the policy relates to proposals for such uses outside city or town centre locations and requires a sequential test approach to be adopted in such scenarios. It also requires retail impact assessment in such scenarios to ensure that the proposed development, provided it is over 500 sqm, does not have an adverse impact upon existing town centres.
- 5.3.28 **Policy DM19** does allow a limited amount of retail development outside defined centres, provided it is of a small scale within the urban areas of the district or an otherwise-sustainable location, is readily accessible by foot and cycle from surrounding areas, and is compatible with surrounding land uses.
- 5.3.29 **Policy DM22** relates to leisure facilities and attractions, and in the case of major facilities states that they should be within identified town centre boundaries of Lancaster and Morecambe, preferably on previously developed land. Alternatively they can be on specific allocation sites or part of an identified direction of mixed-use growth set out elsewhere within the local Development Plan. Proposals in rural areas will be supported where it is demonstrated through a robust assessment that a rural location is necessary for the facility / attraction and it cannot be located on a more sequentially preferable site. The policy supports such development where it relates to either the expansion of an existing leisure facility or attraction or is for the conversion of suitable existing buildings in the countryside, and the proposal complies with other relevant policies in the Development Management DPD. Proposals of less than 1,000 sqm of floor space will be supported where in addition to the previous criteria the proposal is located within a town centre boundary, preferably on brownfield land, or within a complex of existing rural buildings; it is accessible by non-car modes of transport; it does not have an adverse impact on the visual amenity of the locality; and it is compliant with Policy DM 49 in respect of the re-use of rural buildings. It requires that leisure uses outside of defined town centre locations should satisfy the test within Policy DM 16 in relation to the sequential test and impact assessment.
- 5.3.30 **Policy DM23** relates to visitor accommodation and supports hotel development within town centres or other allocated sites within the Strategic Policies and Land Allocations DPD. Again, it requires a sequential approach in relation to hotel proposals outside of such centres, and requires flexibility in relation to format and scale of proposals.
- 5.3.31 All proposals for hotel development will be expected to demonstrate that the location is accessible by a range of transport modes and public transport.
- 5.3.32 In relation to other visitor accommodation, including self-catering but excluding caravan sites, camping pods, log cabins and chalets, etc., it again prioritises sites within the existing built-up areas of the district and, amongst other things, the re-use of existing rural buildings.
- 5.3.33 **Policy DM27** seeks to ensure the protection of open spaces and sports and recreation facilities, and states that where there are areas with deficiencies in such provision, developers will be required to make financial contributions towards either off-site provision or the creation of new, or enhancement of existing, open spaces, sports and recreation facilities. Such facilities should be fully accessible to the public without any restrictions and not have an adverse impact on their surroundings in terms of residential amenity, visual amenity etc.
- 5.3.34 **Policy DM28** requires major developments (depending on size and scale) to undertake and implement an employment and skills plan which will set out opportunities for, and enable access to, employment and upskilling of local people through the construction phase of the development.

- 5.3.35 **Policy DM29** relates to key design principles. In addition to measures such as expecting developments to respect the distinctiveness of the area and its amenities, building in safety and security, promoting diversity and choice, and creating buildings and spaces that are adaptable to changing social, environmental, technological and economic conditions, it also provides criteria on accessibility and highway safety, green infrastructure and the natural environment and other matters such as air noise and light pollution, surface water drainage, the incorporation of electric vehicle charging points and waste and recycling facilities.
- 5.3.36 Importantly, it specifically considers gateway locations and where new developments are located at the entrance or gateway to major settlements they must be of a high standard of design and contribute towards making a positive statement when entering these settlements. Such locations include the approach to Lancaster from the south via the A6.
- 5.3.37 **Policy DM30** relates to sustainable design and requires high standards of design and construction through measures to reduce energy consumption, opportunities for energy supply on-site or decentralised, opportunities to contribute to local and community-led energy initiatives, and the re-use of existing resources, amongst other things.
- 5.3.38 **Policy DM31** relates to air quality management and pollution. It requires that proposals should contribute towards delivering actions detailed within the Lancaster District Air Quality Action Plan. In short, proposals must not worsen any emissions or air pollutants in the area.
- 5.3.39 **Policy DM33** relates to development and flood risk and enshrines within it a requirement for sequential testing and exceptions tests to be met in accordance with national policy. It requires site-specific flood risk assessment on areas at risk of flooding and for appropriate flood mitigation and prevention measures to be proposed and implemented, as well as maintained. It requires amongst other things that sites should be drained on a separate system for foul and surface water.
- 5.3.40 **Policy DM34** relates to surface water runoff and sustainable drainage, which again requires new developments to adopt a sustainable urban drainage system in accordance with a surface water drainage hierarchy.
- 5.3.41 **Policies DM35** and **DM36** seek to ensure that developments have adequate water supply and that waste water is appropriately dealt with, and seek to protect water resources and infrastructure respectively.
- 5.3.42 **Policy DM37** seeks to control development affecting listed buildings to ensure that they are conserved and enhanced where possible. The policy recognises that there will be a need for a reduction of the carbon footprints of listed buildings, and sets a presumption in favour of the installation of renewable energy equipment subject to a number of criteria.
- 5.3.43 **Policy DM38** relates to developments affecting conservation areas and reflects the statutory requirements of the 1990 Act as well as policies within the Framework.
- 5.3.44 **Policy DM39** seeks to control development that affects the settings of designated heritage assets. It states the Council will look for opportunities for new development within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Developments that preserve elements of the setting of heritage assets or better reveal their significance will be treated favourably.
- 5.3.45 **Policy DM41** relates to development affecting non-designated heritage assets and their settings. The significance of the asset and the effect of the development upon it will be closely scrutinised.
- 5.3.46 **Policy DM42** relates to archaeology and ensures developments conserve or enhance the significance of a scheduled monument or an archaeological site of national importance.
- 5.3.47 **Policy DM43** relates to green infrastructure and recognises that there may be opportunities to extend the framework of green spaces and corridors in the district. The main element of the policy seeks to protect such spaces from development.

- 5.3.48 **Policy DM44** seeks to support proposals where the primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity and/or geodiversity. It enshrines a principle of net gain of biodiversity assets 'wherever possible'.
- 5.3.49 **Policy DM45** seeks to protect trees, hedgerows and woodland, and requires that new development should positively incorporate existing trees and hedgerows within it. It also encourages new planting of trees, hedgerows and woodland, making use of indigenous species in order to mitigate against the impacts of climate change.
- 5.3.50 **Policy DM46** relates to development and landscape impact, and again reflects the Framework in protecting areas of nationally important designated landscapes. In respect of development outside of protected and designated landscapes, the Council will support development that is in scale and keeping with the landscape character and appropriate to its surroundings.
- 5.3.51 **Policy DM47** relates to economic development in rural areas and supports it where it maintains and enhances rural vitality and character. Development should improve the sustainability of rural communities by bringing local economic, environmental and community benefits. The policy includes an exhaustive list of six types of development that will be supported in principle. The development of greenfield sites within open countryside will only be supported where it is clearly demonstrated through robust assessment that no alternative suitable locations exist within local settlement areas and that the benefits of the proposal outweigh the impacts on local amenity.
- 5.3.52 **Policy DM49** relates to the re-use and conversion of rural buildings and in principle supports them for a range of uses, subject to other policies of the DMDDP.
- 5.3.53 **Policy DM52** relates to the development of holiday caravans, chalets, camping pods and log cabins. It seeks to divert such developments away from the AONBs within the district and in respect of chalets, camping pods and log cabins, provides a list of criteria against which development should be assessed. The list includes, amongst other things, priority to the use of previously developed sites, and where greenfield sites are identified, it should be demonstrated that no alternative on brownfield land exists locally. Criterion 8 also requires that the site is in an accessible location close to existing tourism and leisure attractions and would have no adverse impact on the capacity of the local highway network. In respect of chalets, camping pods and log cabins in particular, they should be of a scale and design appropriate to the locality and make use of sympathetic materials.
- 5.3.54 **Policy DM53** relates to renewable and low-carbon energy generation, and encourages schemes that assist in the transition to a lower-carbon future.
- 5.3.55 **Policy DM57** relates to health and wellbeing and requires that developments should seek to deliver health benefits to all sections of society. The policy seeks to encourage development that promotes physical activity; ensure that facilities are accessible on foot or by bicycle; and ensure that infrastructure is in place to support developments such as providing or contributing to open space, play facilities, food-growing, and indoor and outdoor leisure provision.
- 5.3.56 **Policy DM60** relates to enhancing accessibility in transport linkages. It seeks to ensure that higher-density mixed-use developments are located in accessible centres or close to main public transport routes. Generally, proposals should minimise the need to travel particularly by private car and to maximise opportunities for walking, cycling and using public transport.
- 5.3.57 **Policy DM61** supports walking and cycling. The Council will, where possible, support the growth of the local cycling network within the district.
- 5.3.58 **Policy DM63** relates to transport efficiency and travel plans, and requires developments to make appropriate contributions to improve the transport network and infrastructure that will serve it. It requires transport assessments or statements to be prepared for appropriate developments, as well as travel plans where developments involve significant residential, commercial or employment development.

5.3.59 **Policy DM64** relates to the Lancaster District Highways and Transport Masterplan. This document has been published by Lancashire County Council and addresses a number of key issues including improvement to highway capacity on the A6 corridor between Lancaster city centre and Galgate, and the establishing of a new rapid transit system between south Lancaster, the city centre and other locations beyond. It requires developments to contribute at levels both reasonable and directly related to the development proposed.