

Lancashire Minerals and Waste Development Framework: consultation on the affect of NPPF

This comment on an aspect of the Lancashire Minerals and Waste Development Framework comes from the Heaton-with-Oxcliffe Parish Council in Lancaster and District. It concerns the plans for the local-built waste management facility to be located in the Parish in, and near, the White Lund Trading Estate, Morecambe [BWF 16].

Members of the Parish Council appreciate that their comments at this stage should be confined to the impact of the National Planning Policy Framework , March 2012 and the Technical Guidance associated with it. Members have consulted the National Planning Policy Framework and the Technical Guidance documents.

Members note the Minister’s comments in the Foreword to the NPPF to the effect that:

“In part, people have been put off from getting involved because planning policy itself has become so elaborate and forbidding – the preserve of specialists, rather than people in communities”.

Members agree with this comment and, as lay citizens without particular relevant expertise, they have found it very difficult hitherto to access the planning process and to represent the views of their electorate. The NPPF documentation has been helpful in this respect in its accessibility and clarity.

The document *Site location and Development Management Policies DPD – Part Two Site Plans: Submission Version - Track Change December 2011* [Lancashire Minerals and Waste Development Framework] states that:

“In terms of specific changes, parts of the existing [White Lund] industrial estate and most of the currently undeveloped site lie within Flood Zone 3” [page 52].

However, the Technical Guidance document, associated with the NPPF, observes that:

“Only where there are no reasonably available sites in Flood Zones 1 or 2 should the suitability of sites in Flood Zone 3 be considered, taking into account the flood risk vulnerability of land uses and applying the Exception Test if required” [paragraph 5]

and the NPPF document states that:

“Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk” [paragraph 100].

Discussing the Exception Test and the Sequential Test, the NPPF document determines that the aim:

“is to steer new development to areas with the lowest probability of flooding. Development should not be allocated or permitted if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower probability of flooding” [paragraph 101].

It continues that there should be:

“a site-specific flood risk assessment [which] must demonstrate that the development will be safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will reduce flood risk overall” [paragraph 102].

The Parish Council is concerned that that there has been insufficient consideration, and insufficient transparent justification, of the food risk incurred if the White Lund Trading Estate and the adjacent green field site were to be used for the facility in question. In particular, the Parish Council is not aware that sufficient site specific testing has been carried out in terms of the risks associated with a Flood Risk Zone 3 proposal. It believes that there will be less risky, more suitable, sites available. The Parish Council contends that the proposals for the choice of a site in and adjacent to a Flood Risk Zone 3 do not meet the criteria proposed in the NPPD and Technical Guidance documents. Members further contend that this major objection to the choice of the White Lund Trading Estate as a location, combined with other objections relating to the increased noise, dust pollution and road congestion which will be caused in adjacent residential areas, including a primary school, mean that the proposal to site a waste disposal facility at White Lund should be re-considered.

Submitted on behalf of the Heaton-with-Oxcliffe Parish Council

Dr Keith Percy, Chairman

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