

Rossendale Local Plan Examination

MATTERS, ISSUES AND QUESTIONS (MIQs)



Matter 10 – Housing site allocations: Bacup, Stacksteads, Britannia and Weir

Issue – Are the proposed housing allocations in Bacup, Stacksteads, Britannia and Weir justified, effective, developable/deliverable and in line with national policy?

- H20 – Old Market Hall, Bacup**
- H21 – Reed Street, Bacup**
- H22 – Former Bacup Health Centre**
- H23 – Glen Mill, 640 Newchurch Road, Stacksteads**
- H24 – The Former Commercial Hotel, 318A, 316B and 316C Newchurch Road**
- H25 – Land at Blackwood Road, Stacksteads**
- H26 – Land off Greensnook Lane, Bacup**
- H27 – Land off Fernhill Drive, Bacup**
- H28 – Sheephouse Reservoir, Britannia**
- H29 – Land off Pennine Road, Bacup**
- H30 – Tong Farm, Bacup**
- H31 – Lower Stack Farm**
- H32 – Booth Road/Woodland Mount, Brandwood**
- H33 – Land off Rockcliffe Road and Moorlands Terrace, Bacup**
- H34 – Land at Higher Cross Row, Bacup**
- H35 – Shadlock Skip, Stacksteads**
- H36 – Hare and Hounds Garage, Newchurch Road, Stacksteads**
- H37 – Land off Gladstone Street, Bacup**
- H38 – Land off Burnley Road and Meadows Avenue, Bacup**
- H39 – Land off Cowtoot Lane, Bacup**
- H40 – Land off Todmorden Road, Bacup**
- H41 – Thorn Bank, Bacup**
- H42 – Land south of The Weir Public House**
- H43 – Land west of Burnley Road, Weir**
- H44 – Irwell Springs, Weir**

The general questions below apply to all of the sites within Matter 10 and the answers will correspond with the respective letter.

The additional specific questions raised by the Inspector in the MIQs document for certain site allocations will be set out under the relevant site allocation.

General Questions

a) Is the site suitable for housing? Are there any specific constraints or requirements associated with the site, or a need to seek mitigation measures to achieve an acceptable form of development? Should these be specified in the Plan?

b) Is the proposed site capacity appropriate, taking account of constraints and the provision of necessary infrastructure?

c) Is the site available and deliverable in the timescales envisaged?

The following commentary has been informed by evidence such as the SHLAA 2018 ([EB004](#)), the Heritage Impact Assessment ([EL1.002g](#)), Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2016 ([EB032](#)), Landscape Study ([EB025](#)) and responses from consultees such as Highways England and LCC Highways (see Regulation 19 responses [SD010](#)). These have provided information on constraints and, if identified, potential mitigation. Further information provided as part of a planning application has also been used where relevant.

If the Inspector deems it to be appropriate, further detail could be provided on those sites where specific constraints and/or mitigation has been identified (if these are considered to necessitate specific guidance). This could include a site plan and a brief summary of considerations and could be prepared for relevant sites as a Main Modification.

H20 – Old Market Hall, Bacup

- a) The 2018 SHLAA concluded the vacant building is suitable for reconversion. The building is Listed and situated within Bacup Town Centre Conservation Area. The retention of features and the use of high quality materials are expected for its conversion.
- b) The site capacity of 16 dwellings is considered appropriate for the building. It aligns with the landowner aspirations to develop 14 to 18 units on site.
- c) The site is available now and deliverable within years 1-5 of the plan period. The landowner is actively in discussion with Planning Officers regarding the re-development of the site and a planning application is expected in 2020.

H21 – Reed Street, Bacup

- a) The 2018 SHLAA concluded the site was suitable for housing and an outline planning application (2018/0414) for 22 dwellings is recommended for approval subject to the Section 106 agreement being signed.
- b) The site capacity of 13 dwellings is considered appropriate as it has been estimated using a net developable area that excludes surface water flooding to the north-east of the site and applies a density of 30 dwellings per hectare. However, as stated above, the landowners have submitted an outline application for 22 dwellings and, taking this into consideration, the Council considers that the site capacity could be increased to 22 dwellings subject to permission being granted. This will be reflected in future updates to the Five Year Housing Land Supply (5YHLS) report.
- c) The site is available and can be delivered in years 1-5 of the plan period.

H22 – Former Bacup Health Centre

- a) The site is suitable for housing as evidenced by the extant planning approval 2017/0100 for a 22 no. bedroom care home which is currently under construction.
- b) The site capacity reflects the planning permission for the site.
- c) The site is currently under construction and it is expected to be completed within years 1-5 of the plan period.

Specific Question:

- i) **Would all 22 dwellings be specialist housing as per Policy HS19? Should the Policy refer to specialist housing instead of special needs housing?**

The 22 bedrooms will be provided within a care home for elderly and adults with learning difficulties.

If the Inspector deems it appropriate, Table 1 within Policy HS2 could be amended to refer to specialist housing instead of special needs housing as a Minor Modification.

H23 – Glen Mill, 640 Newchurch Road, Stacksteads

- a) The site is suitable for housing as evidenced by the outline approval for 9 dwellings (reference 2017/0130).
- b) The site capacity of the site allocation matches the capacity of the outline application and is considered appropriate.

- c) The site is being marketed and is considered deliverable within the first five years of the plan period.

H24 – The Former Commercial Hotel, 318A, 316B and 316C Newchurch Road

- a) The site is suitable for housing as evidenced by a previous planning permission (now expired) for 7 dwellings. No specific constraints have been identified which would prevent a future application being approved.
- b) The site capacity of 7 dwellings aligns with the capacity of the previous planning application. It is considered to be appropriate.
- c) The site is available now and is considered deliverable within the first five years of the plan period as demonstrated by the pre-application submitted and determined in 2019 and recent discussions between the landowner and Planning Officers.

H25 – Land at Blackwood Road, Stacksteads

- a) The 2018 SHLAA concluded the site is suitable for housing subject to a contaminated land assessment being carried out on the site, particularly to the south.
- b) The site capacity of 41 dwellings is considered appropriate as it has been estimated using a net developable area avoiding constraints such as a wooded area along Blackwood Road and based on a density of 30 dwellings per hectare.
- c) The site is available now and is considered deliverable within the first five years of the plan period as evidenced by the current marketing of the site and the willingness of the landowners to submit a planning application upon adoption of the Local Plan.

H26 – Land off Greensnook Lane, Bacup

- a) The site is suitable for housing as evidenced by the extant planning approvals, the most recent being for 26 dwellings (reference 2018/0202).
- b) The site capacity of 26 dwellings is considered appropriate as it matched the capacity of the extant planning approval. It has been reduced to 24 dwellings in the housing trajectory set out in the submitted document EL1.002j(iii), as the site is under construction and two of the dwellings had been built as of 01/04/19.
- c) The site is currently under construction and it is expected to be complete in years 1-5 of the plan period.

H27 – Land off Fernhill Drive, Bacup

- a) The SHLAA 2018 concluded that the site is suitable for housing. No significant constraints were identified.
- b) The site capacity of 5 dwellings is considered appropriate as it has been estimated using a net developable area avoiding the wooded area present on site and considering a density of 30 dwellings per hectare.
- c) The site is available and can be delivered within years 6 to 10 of the plan period.

H28 – Sheephouse Reservoir, Britannia

- a) The SHLAA 2018 concluded that the site is suitable for housing. Mitigation measures should be carried out to minimise the impacts on the landscape as set out in the Landscape Study.
- b) The site capacity of 63 dwellings is considered appropriate as it is based on a net developable area which avoids a drain, an area at high risk of surface water flooding and a wetland and heath Stepping Stone Habitat. The capacity is also based on a density of 30 dwellings per hectare.
- c) The site is available and can be delivered within years 6 to 10 of the plan period.

H29 – Land off Pennine Road, Bacup

- a) The 2018 SHLAA concluded the site is suitable for housing. The Environmental Network Study requested a masterplan to identify measures to contribute to the green infrastructure functions of the site. The Landscape Study concludes the site is suitable with mitigation.
- b) The site capacity of 84 dwellings is higher than the number of dwellings proposed in the planning application under consideration (reference 2019/0214). Subject to the approval of the planning application, the site capacity could be reduced to 71 dwellings. This will be reflected in future updates to the 5YHLS report.
- c) The site is available and it is considered to be deliverable within years 1-5 of the plan period.

Specific Questions:

- i) Is the site capable of being safely accessed? What impact would the proposal have on the local road network and are mitigation measures necessary? What is Lancashire County Council's latest position?

Lancashire County Council Highways Department commented on the planning application 2019/0214. Their summary states that "The development can be supported in principle, however there are a number

of issues which require further clarification and amendment to make the proposals acceptable in highway terms.”

- ii) What effect would the proposed allocation have on drainage and surface water in the area?

United Utilities commented on the above planning application. They did not raise any objections but requested two conditions to make the development acceptable.

The Lead Local Flood Authority commented on the above planning application and raised no objections subject to a final sustainable drainage scheme to be submitted.

- iii) Is the site suitable for housing and can it be safely developed with particular regard to any contamination and historical mining?

The 2018 SHLAA concluded that the site is suitable for housing. The Environmental Protection Team commented on planning application 2019/0214 and despite raising some concerns, considers that the site appears to be at a relatively low risk. In the event that permission is granted, they have requested a Preliminary Risk Assessment and, if potential risks are identified, a Phase 2 Site Investigation.

If unacceptable risks are identified, a land remediation strategy should be submitted to the Local Planning Authority.

The site is situated within a low risk development area according to the Coal Authority information.

- iv) Is the site open space of public value? If so is its loss justified within the terms of paragraph 97 of the National Planning Policy Framework?

The site is within the ownership of Rossendale Borough Council and is currently designated as 'Greenlands'. An assessment has not recently been conducted to determine the open space value of the site. This is being assessed through the planning application on the site.

The site was assessed as part of the Environmental Network Study 2017 (EN Study), which identified the site delivered a limited number of Green Infrastructure functions, one being recreation, and concluded the site was of lesser environmental value compared to others in the Borough. The EN Study recommended the site could be considered for release for development.

H30 – Tong Farm, Bacup

- a) The 2018 SHLAA concluded that the site is suitable for housing, subject to a land contamination report, the Coal Authority approval and landscape mitigation.
- b) The site capacity of 51 dwellings is considered appropriate as it is based on a net developable area of 1.7ha and a density of 30 dwellings per hectare.
- c) The site is available and considered deliverable within years 1-5 of the plan period as evidenced by an outline planning application for 33 dwellings, which is under consideration for part of the site.

H31 – Lower Stack Farm

- a) The 2018 SHLAA concluded that the site is suitable for housing subject to the improvement of the vehicular access.
- b) The site capacity of 10 dwellings is considered appropriate based on a net area of 0.32ha and a density of 30 dwellings per hectare.
- c) The site is considered available based on the call for sites information received. However, it is expected to be developable within years 6 to 10 of the plan period rather than during years 1-5.

H32 – Booth Road/Woodland Mount, Brandwood

- a) The 2018 SHLAA concluded that the site is suitable for housing. No specific constraints were identified.
- b) The site capacity of 10 dwellings is considered appropriate as it is based on a net developable area of 0.34ha and a density of 30 dwellings per hectare. However, the landowner and their agent submitted a representation at Regulation 19 stating the capacity should be increased to 16. This will be discussed further in the specific question below.
- c) The site is available and the landowner/developer has held recent pre-application discussions with Council Officers, where it was stated a planning application would be forthcoming. The developer has a strong record of delivery within the Borough and therefore the Council considers this site deliverable within years 1-5 of the Plan Period.

Specific Question:

- i) Should the capacity of the site be increased to 16 dwellings as suggested by the landowner?

The existing capacity of 10 dwellings is considered appropriate, however, the landowner has stated at Regulation 19 that this could be increased to 16 and in recent pre-application discussions with Council Officers the landowner has stated the site capacity could be increased.

As no planning application has yet been submitted for the site allocation, the Council considers the existing capacity of 10 as appropriate. The number of dwellings granted permission through any future application will be reflected in updates to the 5YHLS report

H33 – Land off Rockcliffe Road and Moorlands Terrace, Bacup

- a) The allocation is made up of two SHLAA sites and SHLAA16080 (Land off Rockcliffe Road) which forms the western section of the allocation has an extant planning approval (2018/0043) and is currently under construction.

The SHLAA 2018 concluded the remaining part of the allocation – SHLAA16081 is suitable for housing subject to appropriate mitigation measures. The site adjoins a Stepping Stone habitat and is located close to a Listed Building, whilst the Landscape Assessments recommends mitigation, especially along the south and western boundaries.

- b) The site capacity of 63 dwellings is considered appropriate as it is based on the extant planning approval for 26 dwellings and an estimated yield of 37 dwellings for the adjacent site, which is based on a net developable area of 1.22ha and a density of 30 dwellings per hectare.
- c) The site is available and 26 dwellings of the site capacity are expected to be delivered in years 1-5 of the plan period.

H34 – Land at Higher Cross Row, Bacup

- a) The 2018 SHLAA concluded that the site is suitable for housing. Heritage impact will need to be considered.
- b) The capacity of 17 is considered appropriate as it is based on a net developable area of 0.53ha, which avoids the former burial ground to the south of the site, and a density of 32 dwellings per hectare.
- c) The site is available and is considered deliverable in years 6-10 of the Plan period.

H35 – Shadlock Skip, Stacksteads

- a) The 2018 SHLAA concluded that the site is suitable for housing; this is considered to have less amenity impact than its existing use. Specific constraints include the need to improve access to the site and the need to provide mitigation against flood risk.

- b) The capacity of 22 dwellings is considered appropriate as it has been based on a net developable area which excludes areas identified as being at flood risk.
- c) The site is available and is considered deliverable within years 6-10 of the Plan Period.

H36 – Hare and Hounds Garage, Newchurch Road, Stacksteads

- a) The site is suitable for housing as evidenced by the outline planning approval (2015/0030) for 9 dwellings
- b) The site capacity of 9 dwellings aligns with the capacity of the previous planning application. It is considered to be appropriate.
- c) The site is available and is considered deliverable in years 6-10 of the Plan Period.

H37 – Land off Gladstone Street, Bacup

- d) The 2018 SHLAA concluded the site was suitable for housing subject to a coal risk assessment. Heritage impact will need to be considered.
- a) The site capacity of 63 dwellings is considered appropriate as it is based on a net developable area of 2.1ha and a density of 30 dwellings per hectare.
- b) The site is available and is considered deliverable in years 6-10 of the Plan period.

H38 – Land off Burnley Road and Meadows Avenue, Bacup

- a) The site is suitable for housing as evidenced by the extant planning approval of 2017/0031 for 6 dwellings.
- b) The site capacity of 6 dwellings is considered appropriate as it is based on planning approval 2017/0031.
- c) The site is available. The Local Plan estimates the site can be delivered in years 6-10 of the Plan period, however, the Council proposes to revise the trajectory for H38 following the recent approval of reserved matters pursuant to planning approval 2017/0031. Therefore, the Council considers it appropriate to revise the trajectory for H38 and expects the site to be delivered in years 1-5 of the Plan period.

Specific Question:

- i) Is the site safe in flood risk terms? Have the concerns of the Environment Agency been addressed?

The site has an extant outline planning approval for 6 dwellings, which the EA raised no objection to and all reserved matters, which concern the EA, have been discharged.

The Local Lead Flood Authority has been consulted on the site and they have noted the east and west boundaries have small areas that are classed as low flood risk from surface water, yet with a carefully considered surface water drainage plan, with adequate drainage mitigation, development of this site could reduce any surface water flood risk within it.

H39 – Land off Cowtoot Lane, Bacup

- a) The SHLAA considers the site is suitable for housing.
- b) The capacity for this site is 151 dwelling units, subject to constraints such as landscaping mitigation, topographic survey and other site investigation works.
- c) The land is within the ownership of Rossendale Borough Council and is being considered by Homes England within the Accelerated Construction Programme.

Specific Question:

- i) Is the site open space of public value? If so is its loss justified within the terms of paragraph 97 of the National Planning Policy Framework?

This allocation includes land currently in use by Bacup Borough Football Club. When the Council consulted at the Regulation 19 stage it was expected that, as part of its redevelopment, the Football Club would relocate to new premises. However, this has not been possible and the Football Club is to remain at its current location, and so this portion should be removed from the allocation and protected as a Recreation Area.

The rest of the land is currently in use as agricultural grazing land. There are no Public Rights of Way actually through the site although there are surrounding the site.

- ii) Is the site capable of being safely accessed? Have the concerns of the Local Highways Authority been satisfied specifically can two points of access be provided?

An access scheme has been prepared by independent transport consultants using one point of access at Gordon Street, and this has been commented upon by the Highway Authority, which notes that a safe access can be achieved and although there are still outstanding

issues which would need to be considered as part of a Transport Assessment, it is considered that these can be resolved.

I think this proposal is definitely a step in the right direction over using Cowtoot Lane as vehicular access.

There are some issues though that will need careful consideration as part of the Transport Assessment:

- *Pedestrian and cycle access. Footways along Gordon Street appear to be obstructed by parked vehicles. I would suggest consideration be given to an alternative route for pedestrians and cyclists (Cowtoot Lane?)*
- *Width of Gordon Street only appears to be 5.3m (from Map zone). Access for two way traffic may potentially be an issue due to parked vehicles, especially when parking takes place on both sides of the carriageway.*
- *There is a 90 degree bend at bottom of the hill into Hammerton Street – miss it and you are in the Irwell, although it is protected by an Armco barrier. There are currently no recorded injuries over the last 5 year period, although I suspect this may not have been the case prior to the introduction of the Armco.*

- iii) Is the site suitable for housing and can it be safely developed with particular regard to any contamination and historical mining issues?

This land is within the Council's ownership and is being considered as part of Home England's Accelerated Construction scheme, and required works that will need to be undertaken to de-risk the site will include intrusive site investigations. Part of Cowtoot Lane is within a Development High Risk Zone and comments will need to be sought from Coal Authority.

H40 – Land off Todmorden Road, Bacup

- a) The allocation is made up of three SHLAA sites and the SHLAA concludes that the allocation is suitable for housing. A number of constraints have been identified but none are deemed to be insurmountable.

The site is within the Coal Authority high risk development area and is identified as a mineral safeguarding area, therefore a coal risk assessment will be required, as well as a land stability assessment. The site is identified as a Settled Valleys Landscape character type and the Landscape Study recommends avoiding development to the north of the site.

The HIA states the site is suitable for residential development subject to design, layout and material considerations as well as a reduction in the

number of dwellings on SHLAA16052.

- b) The site capacity of 53 dwellings is considered appropriate as it is based on a net developable area of 2.98ha which takes account of the Landscape Study and avoids development to the north of the site, as well as comments raised in the HIA.
- c) The site is in more than one private ownership but all landowners have expressed an interest in bringing the site forward for residential development and therefore the site is considered available. The site is available and the Council considers the site deliverable within years 1-5 of the Plan period.

Specific Question:

- i) Is the site capable of being safely accessed? Have the concerns of the Local Highways Authority been satisfied specifically can the site be safely accessed via the Moorside Crescent?

Following the Regulation 19 consultation period, the Council amended the boundary of the site allocation to include land which extends to Todmorden Road, from which the site could be accessed.

- ii) What effect would the proposed allocation have on drainage and surface water in the area?

The Local Lead Flood Authority has been consulted on the site allocation and notes that with a carefully considered surface water drainage plan, with adequate drainage mitigation, development of the site could reduce any surface water flood risk within the site.

In accordance with the NPPF and the Non-Statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems, development must prevent any negative impact of surface water runoff therefore the allocation should have no issues on the drainage and surface water in the area.

H41 – Thorn Bank, Bacup

- a) The SHLAA 2018 concluded the site is suitable for housing subject to a land contamination assessment. It should be noted that some wastewater infrastructure is present underground and this should be taken into account. The playgrounds and MUGA present on site should be retained.
- b) The site capacity of 46 dwellings is considered appropriate as it is based on a net developable area of 1.55ha, which has been reduced to reflect the playgrounds and MUGA currently on the site, and a density of 30 dwellings per hectare.
- c) The site is available and is considered deliverable in years 6-10 of the Plan period.

H42 – Land south of The Weir Public House

- a) The SHLAA 2018 concluded that the site is suitable for housing subject to a coal risk assessment being submitted in relation to the site being located in a high risk area.
- b) The site capacity of 52 dwellings is considered appropriate as it is based on a net developable area of 1.77ha and a density of 30 dwellings per hectare.
- c) The site is available and is considered developable in years 6-10 of the Plan period.

H43 – Land west of Burnley Road, Weir

- a) The SHLAA 2018 concluded that the site is suitable for housing subject to a coal risk assessment being submitted in relation to the southern section of the site being located in a high risk area. The access to the site would also require improvements.
- b) The site capacity of 10 dwellings is considered appropriate as it is based on a net developable area of 0.46ha and a density of 22 dwellings per hectare.
- c) The site is available and is considered developable in years 6-10 of the Plan period.

Specific Question:

- i) Is the site capable of being safely accessed?

The Local Highway Authority have been consulted on the site allocation and have stated they would advise any applicant to have regard to visibility.

H44 – Irwell Springs, Weir

- a) The site is suitable for housing as evidenced by the extant planning permission 2003/154 for 56 dwellings, of which 10 have been completed under Phase 1 of the development.
- b) The site capacity of 46 dwellings is considered appropriate as it is based on the extant planning approval for 56 dwellings and takes account of 10 dwellings already being complete.
- c) The site is available and is considered deliverable in years 1-5 of the Plan period. A pre-application submitted by the landowner is currently under consideration and the landowner is currently in the process of discharging conditions relating to the previous planning approval regarding the River Irwell.