

Central Lancashire Local Plan Examination - Matter 9 Hearing Statement

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Associated Reg 19 Submission Reference : ID A36 Neil Lucas

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Context

- 1.1 This Hearing Statement has been prepared on behalf of Logik Strategic Land Ltd ('Logik') in respect of the Examination in Public (EiP) of the draft Central Lancashire Local Plan (CLLP). It builds upon and should be read alongside Logik's representations submitted to the Regulation 19 consultation in April 2025.
- 1.2 Logik is an experienced strategic land promoter with over 50 years' experience in bringing forward high-quality development that delivers lasting economic and social benefits. Based in South Ribble, Logik has worked closely with South Ribble Borough Council ('SRBC') on several significant projects, including assisting with the delivery of the Lancashire County Cricket Club facilities.
- 1.3 In December 2022, Logik submitted an outline planning application (ref: 07/2023/00035/OUT) for the first phase of an employment-led development on land west of Samlesbury. At that time, it was in accordance with the principles of the emerging draft CLLP that identified a growth area around Salmesbury. In parallel, Logik has actively engaged in all stages of the emerging Local Plan process, including making detailed representations to the Preferred Options consultation in February 2023 and the subsequent Regulation 19 draft plan.
- 1.4 Logik's representations raised fundamental concerns regarding the soundness of the draft CLLP, particularly its reliance on a flawed and incomplete employment land evidence base, its failure to plan positively for economic growth, and its omission of a potential Strategic Site Allocation at Cuerdale. Logik maintains that the draft CLLP, as currently drafted, does not robustly identify or meet the area's objectively assessed employment needs, fails to consider the implications of the NCF development, and avoids necessary consideration of Green Belt release.
- 1.5 The purpose of this Hearing Statement is to assist the Inspectors by providing further clarification and evidence in support of Logik's position. It expands upon the matters previously raised in the Regulation 19 representations and sets out the justification for the inclusion of a Strategic Site Allocation at Cuerdale as a critical component of the region's economic strategy and employment land supply.

9.1 Does the site selection process take adequate account of the individual needs of each Authority? How far was this a factor in the selection of sites? What account has been taken of regional and national growth strategies in determining employment need?

- 1.6 As we set out below, the site selection process has not taken adequate account of the needs of each individual authority. There is a **very substantial shortfall in provision in South Ribble**, and indeed across the Plan area as whole.
- 1.7 As we set out in our Matter 8 Hearing Statement, the claimed need figure of 173 hectares is a 'policy off' figure. It takes no account of one-off, transformational growth policies such as the arrival of National Cyber Force (NCF). In addition, the presence of NCF and the need to accommodate supply chain businesses and spin-off trade was certainly not a factor in the site selection process.

9.2 : Site EC4.1 Land North of Lancashire Business Park, South Ribble. Is there evidence that the development of the allocation is viable and developable during the plan period?

- 1.8 Some 9.2 hectares of the claimed new supply in South Ribble (15% of the total) is on Site EC4.1 Land North of Lancashire Business Park. The BE Group state very clearly in their February 2025 assessment that *"the ownership of this site means it is likely to be held as expansion land for the adjacent Leyland Trucks"* rather than being available in the market (see page 141). They also state that... *"bridging the River Lostock would be an additional cost to any development on this site, which could generate viability issues"* (see page 141).
- 1.9 The use of the site for Leyland Trucks is made clear in the Regulation 19 Representation of Mr Phil Jones (ID B53) who we understand to be the MD of Leyland Trucks. The representation makes clear that the site is essential for the long-term future of Leyland Trucks and is not anticipated for wider use.
- 1.10 We are not suggesting the site should be removed from the South Ribble portfolio. However, the Plan must make clear that the site is almost certainly to be safeguarded for the expansion needs of an existing local business rather than for general growth needs. This qualitative caveat is important when assessing the adequacy of the employment land portfolio in the round (see below).

9.3 Taken in the round, does the identified supply make appropriate provision for the future employment needs within the three Authorities for the Plan Period?

- 1.11 The Plan does not make appropriate provision for the future employment needs in South Ribble.
- 1.12 Table 1 provides a summary of the position in South Ribble based on our assessment. The detail behind our assessment of need is contained in our Matter 8 statement and our comments on Site EC6 are set out in our Matter 4 statement. We have not repeated the detail here.
- 1.13 In addition to the new allocations, there will be some additional supply from existing permissions on non-allocated/previously allocated sites. This is understood from the Councils' evidence to amount to circa 10 hectares of supply in South Ribble. This figure has not been made explicit but can be calculated by piecing together Council information.
- 1.14 The headlines from our analysis are as follows:
- Total need is 101 hectares, significantly higher than the Councils' estimate. The difference being the application of the correct past trends methodology (81 hectares rather than 57) and the 20-hectare allowance for policy on growth needs.
 - Total supply is 45 hectares, and this includes 9 hectares at site EC4.1.
 - There is a very significant **quantitative shortfall of 56 hectares**.
 - **Qualitatively the supply portfolio is not a strong one**. It effectively consists of one site (24 hectares at EC6) plus old assorted small sites from the previous plan period (10 hectares) plus a 9-hectare site that will only ever be used for one occupier.
- 1.15 What is needed are additional well-located, well-connected employment allocations in South Ribble. These should be capable of meeting general needs and also located near to the Samlesbury EZ so that they can capture supply chain businesses connected to NCF.
- 1.16 The Logik Strategic Land sites at Samlesbury will collectively make a considerable positive contribution to meeting both (i) general employment land needs and (ii) specific occupier demand related to NCF.

Table 1 - South Ribble – Comparison of Need and Supply (Hectares, rounded to nearest)

	Councils Position (Ha)	Our Position (Ha)
Need		
Past Trends Based Need	57	81
Policy On/Transformational Need	0 (not assessed)	20 (minimum)
Total Need	57	101
Supply		
EC6	50	24
EC4.1	9	9 (but earmarked for a particular user)
Other New Allocations	2	2
Existing Supply	10	10
Total Supply	71	45 (inclusive of EC4.1)
Deficit	(14)	56

Space at Samlesbury EZ

- 1.17 The Enterprise Zone has special status in Central Lancashire as a strategic site. The latest 2024 Local Development Order document states that the site is to cater for... *"growth in and support to the Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing, Science and Technology and Cyber Sectors"* (para 1.2.3). It further adds that... *"activity will focus on inward investment"* (para 1.2.3). The site is not to be used for general business occupiers outside of these target sectors.
- 1.18 All available reports appear to suggest that the National Cyber Force's direct operations will take up most of the remaining space at the Samlesbury EZ. For example the 2025 BE Group report for the Councils (p137) states in relation to the Samlesbury EZ: *"The National Cyber Force Campus will now take up a high proportion of the remaining land and it is not clear what, if any, land will remain to meet further requirements"*.
- 1.19 A recent Statement of Common Ground between the Central Lancashire Authorities and Lancashire County Council states: *"LCC believes that the Enterprise Zone in Samlesbury is likely to reach capacity early in the plan period and suggest that they are aware of significant demand from specialised businesses looking to co-locate with existing businesses in the area"*.
- 1.20 The status of any available land at the EZ is therefore that it is (i) reserved for growth in a small number of target sectors and (ii) is likely to be limited in scale because of the need to reserve land for a growing NCF. It does not therefore help in addressing the shortfalls identified above in Table 1.