



Lidgett & Beyond Group

c/o Heyroyd
Skipton Old Road
Colne
Lancashire BB8 7AD



To: Planning Department
Pendle Borough Council,
Market Street,
Nelson,
Lancashire
BB9 7LG

20th February 2014

Dear Sir or Madam,

The Lidgett & Beyond Group broadly supports Pendle's draft Core Strategy. In particular, it supports the provisions relating to protecting and enhancing our countryside and rural assets, the guidelines and restrictions on housing developments, and the focus on viable and sustainable development. This has been defined as: "Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." (as defined by The Bruntland Report (World Commission on Environment and Development, April 1987).

We support all the Strategic Objectives listed in para 5.2 and, given our location, we support in particular SO9 and SO10 regarding protecting, enhancing and improving access to our green spaces, as well as having respect for our heritage and our landscape.

Our area and our group

Lidgett & Beyond (hereinafter "L&B"), in line with Pendle's draft Core Strategy, would like to work with both Colne Town Council and Laneshawbridge Parish Council to draft a sustainable Neighbourhood Plan for our area which will complement the Borough's Core Strategy, when approved. We would naturally also seek to provide community input to the Pendle Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Policies and have already analysed Appendix 5 of the SHLAA and have found points of dispute within the Council's analysis of the viability of some of the potential housing sites included within it.

With the main Core Strategy, we seek to address Policy 12 which deals with Sites of Settlement Character. The L&B area has one of these at Favordale. We would like to see the boundaries of the Conservation Area redrawn to include this area. We see ourselves as part of the vision contained within the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and, indeed, our raison d'être is bound up with maintaining a sense of local distinctiveness and community derived objectives. L&B has approaching 500 members, most from the Lidgett environs, making us the largest special interest group in Colne, a town of 18,000 inhabitants.

Our response to the Core Strategy consultation seeks to highlight areas where (i) we agree strongly and wish to highlight the matter as key for L&B; (ii) we largely agree and want or expect the Council to strictly enforce the statement or policy set out; or (iii) we disagree and offer a constructive suggestion for a revision.

Population levels and housing targets

The net migration out of Pendle continues to be higher than the numbers of people moving into the borough. The Office for National Statistics predicts that the population of Pendle will grow by 7,700 (para 3.19), whilst the SHMA estimates a growth of 8,461 by 2030. This equates to an ambitious target of 5,764 new households, even though the Communities and Local Government Household Projections indicate an increase of only 531 households by 2021 and 4,220 by 2033 (para 3.20).

L&B suggests that Pendle has set itself too high a target, and has increased the risk of failure, for housing development and we suggest that “break clauses” for revisiting projections and targets are included, so that strategic plans do not make the area a “hostage to development quotas”.

Although terraced housing accounts for 56% of the Borough’s housing stock, with a significant number being in need of upgrading and/or redecorating, there is a large number of empty homes in Pendle which could meet short-term needs or shortfalls (1,400 per para 3.24 or 2,554 per the SHMA). **L&B strongly supports Policy LIV3 which looks at the potential for some empty homes to be acquired and refurbished as affordable housing...as they can provide a sustainable alternative to developing new dwellings, especially on Greenfield sites.**

Further, **L&B strongly supports the statement that any new-build housing does not have a negative impact on the success of the proposals in key regeneration plans (para 11.40).**

The SHLAA has identified land for 8,112 dwellings and **L&B expresses its concern that the Council will take the easy route with profit-hungry developers to develop easily available land quickly, rather than waiting for the “right” land/site (i.e. better for the borough’s longer term strategy) to become available.**

Any potential developer must set out the availability, suitability and achievability of the scheme, with a financial viability assessment for larger schemes. The Council will employ independent specialists to evaluate the viability assessment (para 11.35), but **L&B has already highlighted that such viability calculations should not automatically contain an assumed profit margin of 20%.** This is a competitive marketplace and **L&B wishes the Council to encourage developers to compete for lower margin work, especially where brownfield sites are involved.**

Para 3.110 states that the SHMA carried out in 2013 by Nathaniel Lichfield and partners revealed that there is a shortage of affordable housing within Pendle. Yet, para 3.109 states that by late 2012 the house prices for terraced properties had fallen considerably since 2006 so that it is possible to purchase properties for under £50,000 in Nelson and Brierfield, an ideal price for a starter home. **L&B highlights these statements on adjacent paragraphs conflict substantially with each other.**

Site selection and priorities

The Spatial Strategy (para 7.6) identifies “three clearly identifiable spatial areas”, being the M65 Corridor, the West Craven Towns and Rural Pendle. **L&B disputes treating Nelson, Colne, Brierfield and Barrowford as indistinguishable from each other as the M65 Corridor.** The first point to make is that Barnoldswick is described as having a “large concentration of high value advanced engineering businesses” which “will be the basis for future growth in high-value, high-tech industries”. Surely, if Barnoldswick is the basis for economic growth, it follows it should also be the focus for housing developments, as that would be the most sustainable approach? Nelson, Colne, Brierfield and Barrowford each have very different characters and a “one size fits all” approach should not be adopted when it comes to new developments in these four towns. They are as different from each other as they are from the West Craven towns and, with the potential likely advent of the Colne bypass to Yorkshire, the West Craven towns will ultimately be better placed on the road network, so should bear a larger share of the annual house building quota.

Policy SDP2 Spatial Development Principles states that the scale of development that will be supported should be proportionate to the role and function of the settlement. It lists the Key Service Centres as Nelson (including Brierfield), Colne and Barnoldswick. Yet Policy SDP3 is inconsistent with that list in suggesting a housing distribution split between M65 Corridor/West Craven Towns/Rural Pendle of 70% / 18% / 12% referring to the recent SHMA advice.

The SHMA states that housing delivery will be challenging in certain sub-market areas, in which case a re-distribution of the figures may be required. Table 10.11 in the SHMA lists the market demand for the Pendle housing market sub-areas, and Table 10.8 past housing delivery rates. Both are in direct contrast to the distribution suggested in SDP3. **L&B recommends that SDP3 distribution be reviewed, and a further search for sites be undertaken outside the M65 corridor.**

Paras 7.10 – 7.29 outline the roles that each of these spatial areas should fulfil and offers guidance on factors to consider when looking at future growth and development. L&B wishes to highlight that the Eastern side of Colne, despite being part of the Key Service Centre of Colne, shares many of the limitations of service provision, the infrastructure capacity and environmental constraints of the Rural Service Centre of Trawden and the Rural Village of Laneshawbridge. **L&B wishes the Council to reclassify Favordale, Lidgett and Bents accordingly so that they can enjoy both the protection and investment/enhancement of Rural Pendle.**

In considering the re-use of Brownfield land (para 7.20), the Core Strategy notes that this can help to:

- regenerate derelict sites and remediate land contaminated by previous uses;
- protect the environment by minimising the use of Greenfield sites for development
- provide a desirable and sustainable approach to accommodating future growth in the borough; as such sites are often located close to existing services and facilities;
- increase the likelihood of people choosing more sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling or public transport, thereby helping to reduce carbon emissions and the negative effects of climate change.

L&B notes that the draft Core Strategy then caveats all of the above by stating that it has to be set against the prevailing market conditions for the provision of new housing. **L&B expects the Council to proactively encourage development of Brownfield land.**

L&B welcomes the statements in para 7.28 regarding planning recognising “the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment. As a consequence, development outside of a settlement boundary, as defined on the Proposals Map, will, in most cases, be restricted to help protect the open countryside and the landscapes within it.” L&B notes the caveat yet again “that there will be situations where development in the open countryside may be necessary or appropriate.” Specifically, L&B hopes that when “Policies in the Core Strategy and subsequent planning documents will set out the exceptions where development in the open countryside is considered to be acceptable” that these are clear and unambiguous.

L&B wholly supports Policy SDP2 which states:

“Proposals to develop outside of a defined settlement boundary (i.e. within the open countryside) will only be permitted for those exceptions identified in The Framework, or policies in a document that is part of the development plan for Pendle.”

Site Selection

In order to ensure the best use of land and other resources, the location of new development will also be considered in accordance with the following sequential approach (in order of priority):

- Re-use of vacant buildings and previously developed land within a defined settlement boundary
- Other land within a defined settlement boundary
- Land outside of a defined settlement boundary for appropriate rural uses.

The allocation of land for development in the Pendle Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Policies will follow the sequential approach and prefer land of lesser environmental value.”

Reiterating the need to site new employment opportunities close to where they are most needed, and in locations that are highly accessible to the local population to reduce the need for people to travel (para 7.38) and the infrastructure having sufficient capacity in place before development can proceed (para 7.45), L&B wishes to highlight the way in which the Council can use the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), as per para 7.62.

7.62. The CIL is based around the premise that new development will usually have an impact on infrastructure and as such should make a contribution towards providing it. Current legislation sets out that S106 contributions can only be used to secure necessary requirements to mitigate the effects of the development and make it acceptable in planning terms, whilst CIL contributions are to be sought for more general infrastructure requirements across the borough. The Planning Act 2008 provides a definition of the infrastructure which can be funded by CIL, including transport, flood defences, schools, hospitals and other health and social care facilities, parks and green spaces, cultural and sports facilities, district heating schemes and police stations and other community safety facilities. Affordable housing will continue to be funded by planning obligations (S106) as the Government considered this to be the best way of delivering affordable housing, allowing for contributions to be tailored to particular circumstances and crucially to enable affordable housing to be delivered on site.

7.66. To secure funding for infrastructure improvements arising from any development, developers will be required to contribute towards the cost of provision through a S106 agreement or CIL tariff.

L&B notes that Pendle Council has stated that implementing CIL cannot be used in Pendle, because, as para 7.68 states, “the current economic circumstances will not support the introduction of CIL in Pendle. Therefore, the “Council will seek S106 contributions to mitigate unacceptable impacts of development”. **L&B requires that where the Council is dealing with a Greenfield site, either inside or most especially outside the settlement boundary, where profit margins and market attractiveness are likely to be high, then CIL should be introduced in those circumstances.**

Para 8.9 states that “The area’s built heritage and natural landscapes play an important cultural role and are a catalyst for regeneration. The protection and enhancement of these assets will provide a positive legacy for future generations.” **L&B believes that not following this point is inherently unsustainable.**

Looking at our historic environment and built heritage, as per para 8.50, **L&B insists that the Council does not “seek to”, but actually implements the schemes, programmes and strategies outlined:**

- Require applicants to submit a statement which outlines how their proposal affects heritage assets.
- Prepare and review, on a regular basis, Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plans.
- Maintain a record of heritage assets which are considered to be at risk and devising strategies to protect these.
- Use of Article 4 directions in conservation areas to further control against inappropriate development in these areas.
- Designate new conservation areas where this is merited.

L&B strongly supports Policy ENV1, extracts of which are given below:

Open space and green infrastructure

Existing open spaces will be protected from development. The Council will encourage and support the improvements to the route ways between open spaces along with the creation of new sites as part of a wider programme of green infrastructure provision.

In exceptional cases, the loss of open space may be acceptable to facilitate a particular development proposal. Where this is agreed to be acceptable, compensation will be required in the form of alternative site provision or a financial contribution in order to continue to serve the local population.

Historic environment and built heritage

The historic environment and heritage assets of the borough, including their settings, will be conserved and where appropriate enhanced. This may be through the declaration of conservation areas or other heritage designations. In designated conservation areas proposals should have regard to the relevant character appraisal or management strategy.

Proposals that are likely to affect a heritage asset and/or its setting (including archaeological assets) should submit a heritage statement and/or an archaeological assessment.

All new development will be encouraged to maximise the use of recycled and secondary materials where practicable before considering the use of primary materials in accordance with Policy ENV6.

Landscapes

Development proposals should have regard to the Lancashire Landscape Assessment and specifically the different landscape character types that are present in the borough. Proposals should show how they respond to the particular landscape character type they are located within.

L&B requests that the Council to follow these policy statements very closely and that, for example, “exceptional” really is exceptional and “will be encouraged” is strictly enforced, especially where Conservation or Rural areas are involved. In addition, in the event of a loss of open space, **L&B expects the Council to seek a “significant” financial contribution to recompense the local population.** These sentiments of L&B are in fact highlighted in paras 8.67-8.69 which state that any development should respond positively to their local context, respect the townscape character and heritage of their setting, and use local sustainable materials.

In line with this, L&B supports the provisions of Policy ENV2:

All new developments should viably seek to deliver the highest possible standards of design, in form and sustainability, and be designed to meet future demands whilst enhancing and conserving our heritage assets.

Good design should be informed by, and reflect, the history and development of a place. The historic and natural environments contribute substantially to Pendle's "sense of place" and bring enjoyment to many people. Therefore:

- Proposals should contribute to a sense of place by respecting the built heritage and local context, including the townscape and distinct settlement characteristics of the locality.
- Proposals should ensure the significance of heritage assets and their settings is not harmed or lost.
- Proposals should protect or enhance the natural environment. Where applicable, they should maintain the openness of the Green Belt...

L&B has been involved in several renewable energy applications in and neighbouring our area and we support para 8.94 "In the Green Belt renewable energy developments, which threaten to have a negative impact on the openness of the area, will not be appropriate." We note and wish to highlight the comments in Footnote 116 that "In reality, offshore wind can play a significant contribution to renewable electricity generation on a national and regional scale and as such, if formal district targets were ever set by Government, Pendle may not be required to achieve the full 15.4MW by 2020 for the North West and the UK as a whole to meet the EU targets."

Bearing this in mind, L&B supports Policy ENV3:

The Council will support proposals for all RLC technologies where the proposal is of an appropriate scale for its setting, and where the development will not:

- Have an unacceptable level of impact on the landscape and visual character of an area, either on its own or cumulatively, or
- Result in an unacceptable impact on the value of any ecological or heritage assets, or to residential amenity.

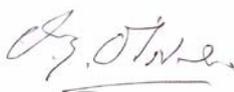
With regard to transport, L&B notes that the A6068 North Valley corridor and through the town are severely congested. Policy ENV 4 notes the benefits of locating new housing, employment and service developments near to each other to give people the opportunity to live and work within a sustainable distance, with Policy ENV 5 noting the improvements in air quality this would bring. **L&B believes that the co-location of housing, employment and services must be paramount with all sustainable planning.**

Conclusion

We close our response letter by reiterating the sentiments of para 18.33 for both L&B members and visitors to our region which states: "access to nearby attractive public green space and footpaths is likely to lead to increased levels of walking for increased health; but it is just as important to be able to view a natural environment."

If you wish to discuss or comment on any of the points raised in this letter, please contact our Group secretary, Sarah Cockburn-Price at sarah@cockburn-price.com or call 01282 868008.

Yours faithfully,
On behalf of the Lidgett & Beyond Group



Owen Oliver
Chairman



Sarah Cockburn-Price
Secretary

Appendix – Support letters from Lidgett & Beyond Group members
(template attached but, as agreed with John Halton, delivered separately)

Response to Pendle Borough Council's Core Strategy Consultation

To whom it may concern

February 2014

Dear Sir/Madam,

As a member / supporter of the Lidgett & Beyond Group, which campaigns to protect and enhance our local neighbourhood and environment, I wholly endorse the comments made in the formal Lidgett & Beyond response to the Core Strategy consultation.

Yours faithfully,