

CORE STRATEGY EVIDENCE BASE
EMPLOYMENT LAND TECHNICAL PAPER
BLACKPOOL COUNCIL
June 2014

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This technical paper provides further justification and explanation of the approach taken by the Council to meeting future employment land requirements over the plan period to 2027, as set out in the Blackpool Core Strategy Proposed Submission (June 2014). It draws on information and data from published sources, including the Local Plan evidence base on employment matters.
- 1.2 The paper is focused on industry, business and office development needs (use classes B1, B2 and B8). Tourism, retail and other town centre uses are considered elsewhere as separate parts of the Core Strategy evidence base.
- 1.3 This technical paper is based on information available to date, including figures from the 2013 Blackpool Employment Land Study (published June 2014). It supersedes the previous technical paper published in 2012 to inform the Core Strategy Revised Preferred Option.
- 1.4 The following sections of the paper provide information on:
- Proposed Core Strategy content relating to employment matters
 - Blackpool's existing employment land supply
 - Establishing the future employment land requirement
 - Meeting the requirement

2.0 CORE STRATEGY

- 2.1 The Core Strategy will look to ensure that sufficient employment land is available over the 15 year plan period to 2027, to positively encourage investment and development that will provide sustainable jobs and support local economic growth. Due to Blackpool's tight boundary and shortage of development land, there is recognition that meeting Blackpool's future employment needs is integrally linked with the wider Fylde Coast employment market area.

Spatial Vision

- 2.2 Key elements of the spatial vision relevant to this paper are:

'As the main economic centre of the Fylde Coast, Blackpool has a diverse and prosperous economy with a thriving culture of enterprise and entrepreneurship. It retains a strong educational offer supporting a skilled and educated workforce encouraging aspiration and ambition. A sustainable integrated transport system supports a competitive Fylde Coast economy with safe and convenient access to jobs and services...

Blackpool Town Centre is thriving at the heart of the resort core and provides an important sub-regional retail, cultural and business centre for Fylde Coast residents...

Blackpool has created a more equal society with sustainable communities having fair access to quality jobs, housing, shopping, health, education, open space, sport and recreation...

South Blackpool makes an important contribution to rebalancing the housing market and growing the Fylde Coast economy by providing improved choice in quality homes and jobs in sustainable locations to meet the community's needs and support regeneration'

Strategic Objectives

2.3 The Core Strategy objectives relevant to this paper are:

1. *Ensure a balanced approach to regeneration and growth with sustainable development which meets the needs of Blackpool's people now and into the future*
3. *Strengthen the local economy through sustainable investment in new enterprise, entrepreneurship and business start-ups, creating better paid jobs and a wider choice of employment*
8. *Develop sustainable and safer neighbourhoods that are socially cohesive and well connected to jobs, shops, local community services including health and education, culture and leisure facilities*
15. *Secure investment in retail, leisure and other town centre uses in Blackpool Town Centre to strengthen the offer with high quality shopping, restaurants, leisure, entertainment and offices, making the town centre the first choice shopping destination for Fylde Coast residents and an attractive place to visit and do business*
17. *Support economic growth at the Blackpool Airport Corridor and on lands close to Junction 4 of the M55*

Employment Policies

- 2.4 *Policy CS1: Strategic Location of Development* identifies that Blackpool's future growth, development and investment will be focused on Inner Area Regeneration; comprising Blackpool Town Centre, the Resort Core and neighbourhoods within the inner areas. Supporting growth in South Blackpool will be promoted to help meet wider housing and employment needs, whilst recognising the important character of remaining lands at Marton Moss.
- 2.5 *Policy CS3: Economic Development and Employment* identifies where the focus for sustainable economic development will be to support a strengthened local economy and meet the employment needs of Blackpool and the Fylde Coast sub-region. This focus is on existing industrial/business land within Blackpool; promoting office development, enterprise and business start-ups in Blackpool Town Centre; and recognising lands at South Blackpool as the most sustainable location for sub-regional economic growth whilst contributing towards meeting the future employment needs of Blackpool's

population. To improve employment opportunities for Blackpool’s residents the focus is on developing an effective skills agenda, securing inward investment and supporting responsible entrepreneurship.

- 2.6 *Policy CS17: Blackpool Town Centre* identifies opportunities to strengthen it as business, retail, cultural and leisure destination for residents and visitors, which includes growing an office sector. *Policy CS19* identifies the Central Business District within Blackpool Town Centre as being a key opportunity to promote office development within the town centre.
- 2.7 *Policy CS24: South Blackpool Employment Growth* supports redevelopment of existing employment sites within South Blackpool to provide high quality modern business/industrial facilities (Class B uses). In addition, proposals for major new industrial/business development (Class B uses) at sustainable locations on the Blackpool/Fylde boundary to support sub-regional economic growth, including Blackpool Airport Corridor and lands close to Junction 4 of the M55, will be supported.

3.0 EXISTING EMPLOYMENT LAND

Blackpool

- 3.1 Prior to the Core Strategy, the last review of employment land in Blackpool was undertaken for the Blackpool Local Plan 2001-16 (adopted in 2006). In this Plan, no new allocations of employment land were made, as it was considered the existing employment estates and remaining lands available within them would provide a sufficient supply of land to meet Blackpool’s development needs for 40 hectares of land during the plan period to 2016. This level of provision was fixed through the Joint Lancashire Structure Plan. Blackpool’s tight boundary and shortage of development land meant opportunities to identify good quality employment land were limited, and so great importance was attached to retaining and improving existing employment land.
- 3.2 Since the adoption of the Blackpool Local Plan (2006), four Core Strategy evidence base documents have been published, providing detail on existing employment land provision:
 - Blackpool 2013 Employment Land Study (published June 2014)
 - Blackpool 2010 Employment Land Review update (May 2010)
 - Blackpool 2009 Employment Land Review update (May 2009)
 - Blackpool 2007 Employment Land Review (March 2008)
- 3.3 The most recent Employment Land Study (ELS) which informs the Core Strategy was undertaken in 2013. It updates the position on Blackpool’s existing employment land supply and take-up of available land up to 2011/12. The Study contains a detailed assessment of all the main existing industrial business estates, their vitality and viability, and their importance to Blackpool’s future economic growth and development. It sets out in detail the existing portfolio of available industrial and business sites and the future requirements for employment land. This assessment supersedes the 2007 Employment Land Review and subsequent updates in 2009 and 2010.
- 3.4 There are 13 main industrial/business locations within Blackpool which are established business areas and safeguarded for employment use in the Blackpool Local Plan (2006). These locations, their size and the remaining available employment land are set out in Table 1, using data from the 2013 ELS. These locations amount to 182.1 hectares (ha) of land in total; 21.6ha of which is undeveloped and remains

available for employment development. This is identified as Blackpool’s baseline employment land supply position. However, undeveloped land at Preston New Road (NS&I site) is currently subject to pre-application discussions and is anticipated to come forward for alternative uses to provide enabling development which will secure the long term employment future of the remainder of the site. This has the effect of reducing Blackpool’s available employment land to a ‘worst case scenario’ of 17.8ha.

- 3.5 The 2013 ELS provides a qualitative assessment of how well the 13 main industrial/business locations match market requirements. It considers the general accessibility, location and environment of each estate as well as the occupiers/uses and levels of vacancy. This assessment found that these estates are largely occupied, viable and remain suitable and appropriate locations for industrial/business use, particularly within the context of Blackpool’s shortage of development land.
- 3.6 The ELS also considers the market attractiveness of the 21.6ha of remaining land available for employment development¹, providing information about the marketing of each site, any current constraints and the prospects for future development. The qualitative analysis of the available employment land showed that 11ha is considered high quality with ‘Very Good’ or ‘Good’ market attractiveness. This comprises sites at Blackpool Business Park (6.9ha), North Blackpool Technology Park (3.7ha) and Moor Park (0.4ha). 8ha is considered medium quality with ‘Fair’ market attractiveness and 2.6ha is considered low quality with ‘Poor’ market attractiveness. Whilst the sites have been formally identified as employment land for at least 10 years and have not been developed to date, many have been subject to firm developer interest for employment development during this period, with the economic downturn preventing them from being developed wholly or in part.

Table 1: Blackpool Employment Land Supply (as at July 2012)

Main Employment Area	Total size (Ha)	Available land (Ha)
Blackpool Business Park	23.6	6.9
Squires Gate Industrial Estate	19.9	1.7
Sycamore Estate	5.2	-
Vicarage Lane	15.6	0.9
Clifton Road	45.9	3.9
Preston New Road (NS&I)	11.9	3.8*
Chiswick Grove	4.5	-
Mowbray Drive	16.9	0.3
Warbreck Hill	8.3	-
Devonshire Rd / Mansfield Rd	3.4	-
Moor Park	17.6	0.4
North Blackpool Technology Park	8	3.7
Blackpool and Fylde Estate*	1.3	-
All Estates	182.1	21.6 (17.8 when discounting NS&I)

**This land has been subject of pre-application discussions for non-employment uses*

¹ Using the criteria set out in the Employment Land Review Guidance Note (2004)

- 3.7 In addition to the 13 main industrial/business locations, the 2013 study also considers the future of two older, smaller estates within the built-up area. Cocker Street and Hoo Hill Estates comprise 2.5 hectares of land in total and are identified as mixed-use industrial improvement zones in the current Blackpool Local Plan (2006). Whilst it remains appropriate to ensure local employment opportunities are retained on these sites, this must be balanced against the opportunity for redevelopment to secure qualitative improvements and wider community benefits, and support the delivery of wider housing and regeneration strategies. For this reason, these sites are not included as identified employment land within the Employment Land Study.
- 3.8 Aside from the main estates, there is a significant amount of unallocated smaller individual sites/back-street premises concentrated in the town's inner areas which provide important job opportunities. Reflecting their continued importance but recognising the mix of problems that arise on some sites, saved Policy DE4 of the Blackpool Local Plan (2006) takes a balanced approach to the future of these sites, stating that development for other uses will be permitted where clear environmental problems mean that wider community benefits outweigh the loss of employment. Whilst there is the potential for redevelopment of smaller employment sites, the 2013 ELS considered that the loss of any of these sites would not require any additional industrial/business land to be identified to compensate for this.
- 3.9 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local plans to provide flexibility where there is no reasonable prospect of an employment site being used for that purpose. In Blackpool's case, some flexibility is allowed in current adopted planning policy for the two individual employment sites outside of the main employment locations (Cocker Street and Hoo Hill Estates) as well as some of the unallocated sites/back street premises with environmental problems.
- 3.10 Policy CS3 of the Core Strategy Proposed Submission also allows a certain amount of flexibility in relation to some of the main employment areas, which present redevelopment opportunities for new employment development. In order to facilitate regeneration, redevelopment opportunities which introduce a suitable mixed-use development, including housing, will be considered in exceptional circumstances on a small minority of sites where this would secure the future business/industrial use of the site. Any enabling development would need to be robustly justified and not conflict with wider plan objectives. This will strengthen Blackpool's employment offer by helping to retain existing occupiers and attract new businesses. This redevelopment will be a particularly important element of supply going forward by helping to retain and improve existing employment land. It will also make available land within those areas more attractive to develop. Specific opportunities for redevelopment are identified in the ELS, which includes a number of estates within South Blackpool that are currently under-occupied and in need of comprehensive improvement.

Fylde Coast Sub-Region

- 3.11 Employment markets are not defined by local authority boundaries; and in Blackpool's case it functions within the wider Fylde Coast sub-region employment market along with the neighbouring authorities of Fylde and Wyre. This is apparent through strong travel to work and employment patterns, with a shared tourism and cultural offer; regionally and nationally significant advanced manufacturing; public sector administration; and a shared infrastructure including Blackpool Airport and strategic highway, rail and tram networks.

- 3.12 Given the shortage of good quality business/industrial land within the Borough, the Council is co-operating with neighbouring authorities to promote the economic development of sites across the Fylde Coast to support sub-regional growth. This includes lands on the Blackpool/Fylde boundary along the Blackpool Airport Corridor and around Junction 4 of the M55. These are essentially an extension of the Blackpool urban area and play an important role in complementing and supporting Blackpool's economic growth. Other significant sub-regional sites are BAE Systems Enterprise Zone (Warton), Hillhouse (Thornton), and the Port of Fleetwood.

4.0 ESTABLISHING THE FUTURE EMPLOYMENT LAND REQUIREMENT

Blackpool

- 4.1 The 2013 ELS determines the key issues for Blackpool and an appropriate method for assessing future employment land requirements.
- 4.2 Three key issues for Blackpool are important in determining future employment land requirements:
- The overall amount of business/industrial land available to meet future needs is low (baseline employment land supply is 21.6ha; while the worst case scenario is 17.8ha)
 - The number of attractive, suitable and available sites is limited (11ha), with much of the remaining land subject to firm developer interest
 - The Borough's tightly drawn boundary and demonstrable lack of future development land means opportunities for further employment expansion within the Borough are extremely limited.

Growth Scenarios

- 4.3 In calculating how much employment land is needed in the future, the study considers various growth forecast models.
- 4.4 Analysing past take-up rates of employment land shows that the average take-up was 1.9ha per annum between 2001 and 2012 and 1.6ha per annum between 1991 and 2012. Whilst there were no significant one-off developments in Blackpool that have distorted these figures over this period, qualitative variations in the availability of land have impacted on take-up rates.
- 4.5 During much of the early period (1991- 2001), Blackpool's supply of land was constrained by a lack of better quality developable sites. This was prior to both modern business parks being made available. It is useful to consider the average take-up rates during both historical periods (i.e. post 2001 and post 2001) in determining future need.
- 4.6 This period includes three years of significantly low take-up rates during the economic downturn; since 2009 only 0.5ha of employment land has been developed in the Borough. It is considered necessary to include these depressed rates in the analysis, to reflect the likelihood of demand/take-up remaining low in the short to medium term until normal market conditions resume.

- 4.7 It is prudent to apply longer period trends in considering forecasts for the plan period. Projecting the average annual take-up from 1991 (1.6ha) suggests a requirement for 24ha of employment land over the 15 year plan period to 2027. Projecting the average annual take-up rate from 2001 of 1.9ha suggests a requirement for 28.5ha. As both long term take-up rates are considered reasonable to consider, taking a mid-point suggests a requirement of 26.25ha.
- 4.8 In considering two alternative methods (policy-off employment based and labour supply forecast methods), these suggest the Borough needs significantly less employment land, which would mean that the realistic supply available is surplus to requirements. However, whilst these forecast methods provide helpful comparisons, their limitations as set out in the ELS mean they are discounted. Using long-term take-up rates to calculate future employment land requirements is therefore the preferred approach, as this reflects local factors and evidence of past trends, and supports economic and housing objectives for the Borough.
- 4.9 Applying a 20% buffer helps to overcome the possibility that some land may not come forward in the short to medium term, provides a choice of sites, allows for reasonable vacancy levels to facilitate ‘churn’ in the market, and provides flexibility while some sites are being redeveloped including those that may require enabling development. It also enables a margin for error with respect to the forecasting process.

5.0 MEETING THE REQUIREMENT

- 5.1 As previously highlighted, Blackpool’s limited development land is a significant constraint to meeting future need within its own boundary. The Borough has an intensely built-up urban area; approximately 80% of which is developed. Remaining undeveloped lands largely comprise of protected open space which provides important recreational and amenity benefits for residents and visitors; or small sites more suited for small-scale (often windfall) development. Blackpool is built up to its northern and southern boundaries, with the few remaining areas of undeveloped open land to the south and east of the town comprising public open space, sites of nature conservation value, Green Belt and Countryside Areas. Due to the intensely built-up urban area, much of this open land has important landscape, nature conservation and environmental value; integral to the local distinctiveness of Blackpool and valued by the local community.
- 5.2 These constraints are reflected in the Core Strategy Issues and Options Paper (2008), which limited the choices proposed in the six alternative spatial options to accommodate 40 hectares of additional employment land² and 7,500 new homes³ to meet Blackpool’s future needs. Public consultation and analysis of each option, including the benefits and disbenefits, informed the Preferred Option (2010). It was recognised at the outset that the preferred option was likely to be finding the right balance through a combination of options, and would be reliant on lands within and on the edge of Blackpool.

²This figure was based on the 2007 Employment Land Review. 40ha was a combined net outstanding requirement for Blackpool and its cross boundary urban edge within Fylde (70ha gross requirement less 30ha of existing available employment land). This combined requirement is now obsolete and the Council is now adopting a different approach through the Duty to Co-operate.

³ At the time, this figure was based on the NWRSS requirement (now revoked). It has been superseded by updated evidence on Blackpool’s future housing requirements, with further information on this set out in a separate Housing Technical Paper (2014).

- 5.3 In considering the options, elements of options 2, 4 and 5 performed strongest. Option 2 targeted growth and development in the inner area, town centre and resort core to achieve the Council’s vision for regeneration; although due to the limited lands available, further development in sustainable locations on the edge of the existing urban area would be required. The most sustainable locations were considered to be Marton Moss (option 4) and the M55 hub (option 5). Marton Moss is the only major area in the Borough which remains undeveloped and it was proposed to develop lands to deliver a wide mix of homes; although the particular characteristics of the Moss would limit the opportunities for employment provision. Reflecting the commitment at the time to sub-regional growth at the M55 Hub, option 5 considered that lands in Fylde in conjunction with lands in Blackpool could be sustainably developed for a mix of uses to help complement and support Blackpool’s economic growth.
- 5.4 This combination of options established Blackpool’s preferred spatial strategy for inner area regeneration complemented by supporting growth.
- 5.5 Other options considered for future development, but discounted, included urban concentration (option 1) and peripheral suburban expansion (option 3). Whilst option 1 would help achieve the Council’s vision for regeneration and promote development in sustainable locations; there were concerns about substantial further intensification of development within the urban area. The limited sites available would only deliver small-scale development unsuitable to provide additional employment opportunities; there could even be a reduction in employment land due to pressure for competing development i.e. residential. Option 3 considered peripheral greenfield locations on the edge of Blackpool to help accommodate development requirements; however this raised considerable environmental concerns as it included less sustainable locations to the east of the town, and would have encroached onto Green Belt and Countryside land. There would be little scope for employment expansion on these sites, both in terms of size and market attractiveness.
- 5.6 The Core Strategy Proposed Submission is informed by the Issues and Options (2008), Preferred Option (2010) and Revised Preferred Option (2012), including representations received on each document, in addition to the Localism Agenda, NPPF and the Duty to Co-operate. The Core Strategy no longer promotes some elements that were originally set out in the Preferred Option (options 2, 4 and 5). A different approach to Marton Moss and the M55 Hub is now taken. In terms of the Moss, although option 4 was taken forward as a preferred option, further consultation established the need to safeguard and enhance the Moss character, which is considered integral to the local distinctiveness of Blackpool and is valued by the local community. Further justification for this change is detailed in the Housing Technical Paper (2014). In terms of the M55 Hub, this no longer has growth point status and a consolidated employment figure for Blackpool and the urban edge within Fylde is no longer being promoted by the Council in response to representations received and the emergence of the Duty to Co-operate. However, lands around Junction 4 of the M55 and along Blackpool Airport Corridor on the Fylde/Blackpool boundary continue to be recognised as a priority for sub-regional growth in the Duty to co-operate, and further development here, in what is essentially an extension to Blackpool’s urban area, would continue to play an important role in supporting and strengthening Blackpool’s local economy.
- 5.7 This revised approach aligns with Blackpool’s preferred spatial strategy for inner area regeneration complemented by supporting growth, although there is now also a focus on the enhancement of Marton Moss through promoting a neighbourhood planning approach.

- 5.8 The analysis undertaken and subsequent choices made regarding locations for future development confirms that Blackpool is unable to meet its own employment needs within its boundary. The implications of Blackpool's tightly drawn boundary and lack of sizeable/quality lands considered suitable for future employment development in the Borough (including on the edge of the urban area at Marton Moss), means that Blackpool's future strategy is to bring forward its remaining employment land supply; to capitalise on existing assets within the Borough, including existing employment estates and the town centre (which is an important sub-regional centre for business opportunities); and to continue to co-operate with neighbouring authorities to support Blackpool and the wider Fylde Coast's economic growth.

Capitalise more on existing assets within Blackpool

- 5.9 The 13 main industrial/business locations (amounting to 182ha of land⁴) will continue to perform an important role as part of Blackpool's strategic employment land supply, and therefore will remain safeguarded for employment use. It is established that 17.8ha⁵ of its remaining employment land supply is considered to be realistically available for employment development. Although limited, it represents a reasonable level of provision against Blackpool's future requirement for an additional 31.5ha of land over the plan period (equates approximately to a 10 year supply).
- 5.10 Making the undeveloped sites more attractive to the market and improving occupancy of existing sites is an important element of Blackpool's future supply. This can be achieved by promoting the regeneration and redevelopment of some employment areas, to help to make the best use of existing employment land and buildings and provide better opportunities for future employment development. In particular, opportunities exist for regeneration and expansion of substantial vacant and under-used space on the Squires Gate Industrial Estate in conjunction with the adjoining estates close to the airport; as well as opportunities for regeneration of lands on the Clifton Road estate currently occupied by Progress House and the gas works site.
- 5.11 Greater emphasis on Blackpool Town Centre, capitalising on infrastructure and accessibility strengths, will develop a more prosperous commercial and business sector and strengthen the town centre economy. The Central Business District scheme forms a key component of this, comprising a high quality mixed use scheme which includes new high quality office accommodation (there is currently little office activity and quality space available in the Town Centre). This will provide a crucial economic driver for Blackpool and the wider Fylde Coast sub-region.
- 5.12 This approach to capitalising on existing assets to improve market attractiveness and encourage investment is complemented by Core Strategy core policies, which aim to improve the quality of place and make Blackpool a more attractive place to invest; reduce the need to travel by providing easy access to jobs (and homes); and improve employment prospects for local people.

⁴ The sites are identified in Table 1 (page 4)

⁵ This does not include the NS&I site which is subject to developer interest for an alternative use

Co-operate on sub-regional employment development

- 5.13 It is well documented⁶ that Blackpool's circumstances are such that meeting its future long term needs is integrally linked with the wider Fylde Coast employment market area. It is important to ensure continued co-operation between the three Fylde Coast authorities to support the economic growth and development of the sub-region. The Duty to Co-operate recognises the need to strengthen the economic performance of the Fylde Coast. Key issues include agreeing the sub-regional employment land requirement and key spatial priorities for economic development on the Fylde Coast.
- 5.14 Paragraph 3.12 of this Paper sets out key sites across the Fylde Coast promoted by the Council and neighbouring authorities to support sub-regional growth. These are lands around Junction 4 of the M55 and Blackpool Airport Corridor on the Fylde/Blackpool boundary, BAE Systems Enterprise Zone (Warton), Hillhouse (Thornton), and the Port of Fleetwood. With the exception of the Port of Fleetwood, these sites are identified as key spatial priorities for future economic development identified in the Duty to co-operate Memorandum of Understanding in addition to the A6 corridor (Garstang) and Central Business District (Blackpool Town Centre).
- 5.15 The Fylde Local Plan Preferred Options (2013) acknowledges that Blackpool's administrative area is characterised by a tightly constrained boundary and Blackpool's total land requirements cannot be accommodated on lands within its boundary. A commitment has been made by Fylde Council to provide around 14 hectares of employment land in addition to its own requirement of 34 hectares which is set out in emerging policy EC1 of the Fylde Local Plan (Preferred Options).
- 5.16 The Council continues to co-operate with Fylde Council regarding the extent of lands promoted for employment development around Junction 4 of the M55 (including Whitehills and Whyndyke⁷) and Blackpool Airport immediately on the edge of Blackpool in neighbouring Fylde. These are high profile locations capable of re-positioning the sub-regional image, due to their proximity to the strategic transport network and with key links to urban centres⁸. The prime location of these sites and the sufficient scale of lands available would attract significant inward investment, creating considerable employment opportunities for the wider sub-region. Their location on the edge of Blackpool means that future development of these lands would essentially be a sustainable extension of the Blackpool urban area, and would help complement and support Blackpool's economic growth⁹. Further development and associated infrastructure would support more sustainable patterns of development and travel between jobs in this location and homes within Blackpool and the wider sub-region.
- 5.17 Wyre also contains key sites of sub-regional significance, including lands at Hillhouse (Thornton) and a number of important employment sites which provide jobs for Blackpool residents, including lands close to Blackpool's urban edge at Norcross. Blackpool Council will continue to co-operate with the future economic development of these lands to support sub-regional growth. However, in comparison, the Council considers that lands on the edge of Blackpool in Fylde are more accessible to the majority

⁶ Including the Blackpool Employment Land Study, Fylde Employment Land Review Summary Statement, Fylde Coast Multi Area Agreement, Central Lancashire City Region Development Plan and Lancashire Economic Partnership Employment Land Strategy (Genecon 2006)

⁷ Proposed as a future location for a mixed-use development scheme, including employment development

⁸ The high profile location is supported by the Lancashire Economic Partnership Employment Land Strategy (Genecon 2006), which identifies Whitehills and Blackpool Airport Business Area as prestige sites for sub-regional growth.

⁹ The specific importance of these lands in Fylde in supporting Blackpool's economic development is set out in the Duty to Co-operate Memorandum of Understanding (2013)

of Blackpool residents, and would encourage more sustainable travel patterns from Blackpool; which is why they are identified as having a specific role to play in complementing and supporting Blackpool's economic growth, as opposed to lands in Wyre.

- 5.18 Looking beyond the sub-region, Blackpool Council is part the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP) which was established April 2011, to provide strategic leadership for directing economic growth and priorities across the county. Work to date has included the preparation of the Lancashire Growth Plan which sets out how the LEP intends to achieve strong and sustainable economic growth. In addition, the Lancashire Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) was submitted to Government in March 2014, which sets out growth ambitions of Lancashire as a whole for the next 10 years.
- 5.19 A key element of the SEP and the Lancashire Growth Plan is the requirement to produce a Local Growth Accelerator Strategy for the Fylde Coast, which focuses on creating and growing economic opportunities for sub-region. The Strategy will be instrumental in supporting Blackpool Council and neighbouring authorities' aspirations for sub-regional growth and will be consistent with the strategic objectives set out in the local plans being prepared by each Fylde Coast authority.

Summary

- 5.20 Continuing to safeguard existing employment land allocations in the 13 main industrial/employment locations including land that remains undeveloped; identifying opportunities for future employment development/regeneration on these existing sites; strengthening the Blackpool Town Centre offer; and the commitment from Fylde Council to provide around 14ha of additional employment land will collectively ensure that Blackpool's future employment land requirement over the plan period is met. Alongside continued co-operation with neighbouring authorities for sustainable development across the Fylde Coast that supports sub-regional economic growth, this approach will achieve the Local Plan objectives for a strengthened local economy in Blackpool and deliver the strongest economic, social and environmental benefits for Blackpool and the wider sub-region.

Background Papers

The following documents have informed this Paper:

- Blackpool Core Strategy Proposed Submission (June 2014) and previous Core Strategy consultation documents including the Revised Preferred Option (May 2012), Preferred Option (April 2010) and Issues and Options (June 2008)
- Blackpool Core Strategy Statement of Consultation (June 2014)
- Lancashire Strategic Economic Plan (2014)
- Blackpool Housing Technical Paper (May 2014)
- Blackpool 2013 Employment Land Study (Published June 2014)
- Lancashire Growth Plan (2013)
- Whitehills Development Appraisal (2013)
- Duty to Co-operate Memorandum of Understanding (August 2013)
- Fylde Local Plan Preferred Options (2013)
- National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)
- Wyre Preferred Option (March 2012)
- Blackpool Core Strategy Issues and Options Report to Executive including Preferred Option Interim Report Appendix (February 2009)
- Central Lancashire City Region Development Plan (2006)
- Lancashire Economic Partnership Employment Land Strategy (Genecon 2006)