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Lancaster South Area Action Plan

Thematic Discussions Engagement Report May 2022

Pre- Regulation 18 Consultation Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

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1.0 Introduction

Background

- 1.1 Lancaster City Council adopted its Local Plan in July 2020 after many years of preparation. The new Local Plan contained Policy SG1 which designated a 'Broad Location for Growth' in the South Lancaster area. The Local Plan included the ambitions of the Council in relation to the delivery of a new Garden Village (after South Lancaster was identified by the Government in 2017 as a location for a new settlement). Policy SG1 designated this area as a location where future growth and development potential would be investigated and it provided a number of broad development principles which would assist in guiding future development.
- 1.2 The Local Plan and Policy SG1 did not address any matters of detail over how development would be achieved in the South Lancaster area, given the scale and significance of what was being process it was felt that these matters could only be satisfactorily addressed through the preparation of a bespoke planning framework for the area – the Lancaster South Area Action Plan DPD.
- 1.3 Work has already commenced on understanding how development could be achieved in the South Lancaster area, in 2019 the City Council appointed masterplanning consultants JTP to prepare a masterplan of how development could be achieved as part of Bailrigg Garden Village. After delays in the masterplan's preparation due to the COVID Pandemic, the [masterplan](#) has now been completed and endorsed by the City Council in February 2022. The masterplan provides a starting point and a series of concepts, visions and ambitions which the Area Action Plan will investigate and explore in bringing together a robust and realistic planning framework for the area.
- 1.4 Following the completion of the masterplan, the City Council have now formally commenced work on the Area Action Plan. This has started with a range of informal engagement events which are seeking to bring together key stakeholders in the preparation of the document, including statutory bodies, infrastructure providers, the local community and the development industry, to ask for their views on some of the key issues which the Area Action Plan must seek to address. The informal engagement process will include the following:
 - A series of Thematic Discussions with statutory bodies, key organisations and infrastructure providers to discuss key issues around establishing a planning framework for the area.

- A Developer Forum with all participating developers to discuss matters of implementation and delivery.
- Engagement with local Parish Councils (a Parish Council Forum) to secure input and dialogue on the progression of the Area Action Plan with representatives of the community.
- The publication of a series of Policy Topic Papers for wider public consultation which will set out the background and context of the preparation of the Area Action Plan and provide opportunity for comment and input into emerging policy options.
- Engagement with young people through a series of Young Persons Workshops and Events which will allow involvement of students in terms of placemaking and shaping policy content.

1.5 The purpose of this engagement will be to shape the content and direction of the draft Area Action Plan DPD which will, for the first time, set out a draft planning framework for how (and where) development will be achieved in the South Lancaster area. The AAP, once drafted and endorsed by Members of the City Council, will be subject to public consultation under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

2.0 Purpose of the Thematic Discussions

Structure of the Events

2.1 In determining the purpose and structure of the events, Council Officers selected a number of key themes which would act as golden threads running through the preparation of the Area Action Plan and form the basis for the events, these themes included:

- A. Addressing the Climate Emergency.
- B. Travel, Transport and Connectivity.
- C. The Natural Environment & Delivery Green / Blue Infrastructure
- D. Infrastructure Delivery.
- E. Community Resilience.

2.2 The five themes identified were structured into five separate virtual events which ran through February and into early March, specifically:

- Addressing the Climate Emergency Event (Wednesday February 23rd 10am – 12 Midday).
- Travel, Transport and Connectivity Event (Thursday February 24th 2pm – 4pm).
- Natural Environment and Delivery of GBI (Monday February 28th 10am – 12 Midday)
- Infrastructure Delivery (Tuesday March 1st 2pm – 4pm)

- Community Resilience (Wednesday March 2nd 10am – 12 Middy)

2.3 The sessions were 2 hours in length and involved a series of presentations to provide background and context both to the Area Action Plan process but also the theme which was being discussed. Following presentations participants went into a series of break-out groups, facilitated by officers of the Planning & Housing Strategy Team, to discuss a series of structured questions. The questions (and the key issues raised in response to them) are set out in Sections 3 to 7 of this report.

Participants to the Events

2.4 The Council sought to invite a range of participants whose background and organisations would provide for a qualitative debate and discussion at the event. The participants came from professional organisations which had a specific interest in the theme discussed and included:

Addressing the Climate Emergency:

United Utilities	Lancaster University	Natural England
Lancashire CC (Climate Change)	Electricity North West	Environment Agency
Lancashire CC (LLFA)	Lancaster City Council	Lune Valley CLT

Travel, Transport & Connectivity:

Sustrans	Lancashire CC (Highways)	Lancashire CC (Cycling / Walking)
Lancashire CC (Public Transport)	Lancaster University	Dynamo
Canal & Rivers Trust	National Highways	

Natural Environment & Delivering GBI:

Natural England	Environment Agency	Lancashire CC (LLFA)
United Utilities	RSK Wilding (Ecology)	Lancashire Wildlife Trust
Lancashire LERN	GMEU	

Infrastructure Delivery:

Lancaster University	Lancashire CC (Education)	NHS / CCG
Lancaster Medical Practice	Canal & Rivers Trust	United Utilities

Community Resilience:

Lancaster University	Lancaster City Council	

3.0 Addressing the Climate Emergency & Low Carbon Development

3.1 The Thematic Discussions were designed to be focused on a series of structured questions which could seek to stimulate wider debate. The structured questions sought to be as open as possible to ensure the widest possible debate on the topic area. As part of the discussions a range of issues were raised and recorded which are set out below.

Structured Questions Posed

3.2 The structured questions posed at the event are set out below:

Climate Emergency – General

- A. Are there any National / Regional / Local projects that the City Council should be aware of in terms of supporting climate mitigation, adaptation and resilience in the South Lancaster area?
- B. What do you feel are the most important / impactful considerations for planning policy in the South Lancaster Area Action Plan in regard to the Climate Emergency? Do you have any views over what the priorities should be in the Action Plan in relation to addressing the Climate Emergency?

Energy Generation

- C. How should opportunities for renewable and low carbon energy be maximised in the Area Action Plan? How can such opportunities be holistically integrated into new development?

What are the tensions and possibilities between single property solutions vs. site-wide solutions? How can such energy solutions be appropriately phased into new development?

Low-Carbon Development

- D. Development in South Lancaster will look to deliver on net-zero ambitions set out in the Climate Review of the Local Plan and, where possible, will look to go further in terms of delivering low-carbon development. What are some of the challenges and opportunities in realising these ambitions? What policy solutions are available to address these? For example
 - It is our ambition that residential and commercial development in the Area Action Plan area will seek to go beyond the energy efficiency requirements set out in the Climate Emergency Local Plan Review. Are there green building benchmarks that you feel should be explored as part of delivering climate resilient and energy efficient sustainable buildings?
 - What are some of the policy drivers that can be used to support community building around delivering on the net zero and climate ambitions for the Area Action Plan? What

skills and education is needed to ensure the success of the development in responding to climate change post-occupation?

Low-Carbon Travel

- E. How can development in South Lancaster promote the role of low emissions and electric vehicles? What are some of the opportunities and challenges from their promotion, particularly in regard of securing the necessary infrastructure to facilitate their use?

Key Issues Raised at the Event

- 3.3 Participants felt that site layout and the integration of features should be used to maximise the role of renewable energies, sustainable travel patterns, biodiversity enhancements and energy efficiency. These features should be planned in a holistic manner from the start and reduce the need for retrofitting in the future. It was viewed as important that there was a co-ordinated approach for delivery of these features between landowners (informed via the Area Action Plan).
- 3.4 The relationship between the Area Action Plan and the Council's Climate Emergency declaration would need to be considered. Would the Plan seek to set specific CO₂ budget limits? It would be important to explore the recommendations of the People's Jury in the context of preparing the Area Action Plan. Content and direction of the Action Plan needs to ensure that it provides a robust approach towards addressing the Climate Emergency in terms of the language used.

Energy Generation

- 3.5 It was agreed that consumer demand for energy is massive and is only going to increase over time. It was therefore important that there is a diverse level of energy opportunities provided in the South Lancaster area.
- 3.6 Consideration should be given to the role of energy centres within new development and the creation of a Renewable Energy Strategy which identifies how low carbon energy sources, such as ground source heating, geothermal energy, solar and hydro can all be incorporated through the development life-cycle. This should consider the role of macro and micro energy generation. In terms of micro generation, consideration should be given to the role of solar PVs on every roof.
- 3.7 Participants also supported the role of communal forms of energy, including investigating the use of communal energy centres and small cluster micro-grids which are more resilient to power outages. There could be communal ownership of these networks which will allow the investment in energy to benefit the wider community, addressing issues such as fuel and heat poverty.
- 3.8 On a practical note, it would be important to control how energy can be supplied back into the grid (if there is any surplus generation). There are a number of practicalities about how this can be

achieved. So if development in South Lancaster wants to be a 'net generator' of energy, consideration over how it connects with the existing network will be important.

Water Efficiency and Management

- 3.9 Participants felt that water efficiency would be a key part of new development in terms of layout and design. Raising the bar from the current standards was seen to be potentially challenging given current national standards. Surface water management will also be important and should be considered in terms of how water could potentially be re-used.
- 3.10 The creation of the new road was considered to provide an opportunity for joint working in relation to water management. There was a recognised need for there to be a comprehensive drainage strategy for the whole South Lancaster area which looks at the inter-relationships between how water is managed as part of the road scheme and how water is managed as part of new development. Whilst it was realised that these features would be delivered separately (and by separate stakeholders) it was important that the implementation included joined up thinking and a holistic approach.
- 3.11 Consideration should be given to whether water courses can provide a source of micro energy generation. SuDS components and ponds, when discharging water, could generate enough power for new development and take pressure off the wider grid. This could be explored further through the Area Action Plan.

Soil Protection

- 3.12 Participants raised the importance of soil and the role of nature-based solutions to create ecosystem resilience. Soil needs to be a critical element of any future Green / Blue Infrastructure policy to reflect the importance of carbon in both vegetation and soil. The correct management of soils can ensure that the levels of carbon which are released through the development process are minimised and have wider benefits both ecologically (i.e. maintaining better, more fertile soils) and for water management (improve drainage and reduce water-logging).

Ultra-Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs)

- 3.13 Participants discussed how new development could maximise the role and use of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs), the County Council are looking to prepare an 'Electric Vehicle Charing Infrastructure Strategy' which will focus on how community hub charging can be increased.
- 3.14 The role of ULEVs can also be expanded through the creation and greater promotion of car clubs and sharing schemes which make use of ULEVs. Some participants felt that it would be important to

undertake a Strategy Electric Vehicle Charging Plan for the District which looks at how electric vehicles can be charged at various points in the district.

Education and Skills

- 3.15 Participants recognised that the innovation and skills required would involve better links with further education establishments. This was particularly seen to be the case when it came to ensuring there was the necessary skills available to facilitate higher standards in terms of construction and design. Consideration should be given to whether the Employment and Skills Plans SPD could be adapted or revised to secure improvement in skills for green construction.

Actions and Next Steps

- 3.16 Following the Thematic Discussion in relation to the Climate Emergency and reflecting on the key issues raised by participants, the following actions have been identified in terms of actions and next steps:

Action A: That the design and layout of new development should seek to maximise environmental benefits around the Climate Agenda, including energy generation and efficiency, biodiversity enhancements and sustainable travel. These issues should be given priority when considering policy content and the allocation of land (both for development and non-development purposes).

Action B: Direct links should be made between the aspirations of the Climate Emergency Declaration and the content and direction of the Area Action Plan, with the People's Jury (and its outcomes) being a key starting point. The relationship between the two should be reflected in the Plan.

Action C: Participants recognised a wide range of options in terms of the creation of energy, from macro to micro to nano scale generation. These need to be explored further, considering the opportunities for significant levels of generation within the South Lancaster area. The implications of significant generation also need to be considered (in terms of impact on existing infrastructure networks) and the outcomes / expectations need to be evidentially based.

Action D: Water management in this area will be a critical consideration moving forward with the need for a comprehensive understanding over how water moves and is stored in the South Lancaster area (See the outcomes of Session 3). With regards to water efficiency, it is important that through good design and layout, new development seeks to maximise the efficiency of water, whether that be through water storage, drainage or its use. The potential options for water management should be consulted on with wider stakeholders given the critical nature of this issue.

Action E: Careful consideration should be given to the management of soil throughout the construction processes to ensure that the value of soil (in terms of ecological benefits, fertility and drainage) is retained and not lost. It will be important that the Area Action Plan seeks to identify management techniques through appropriate policy.

Action F: Through infrastructure delivery, support should be given to the role of Ultra Low Emissions Vehicles (ULEVs) through charging infrastructure but also exploring the roles of car sharing and carpool clubs. The Area Action Plan should seek to support schemes that promote the role of ULEV.

Action G: It is important that using the Climate Emergency Review of the Local Plan as a starting point, opportunities for sustainable design and construction are further explored, in terms of energy generation, water efficiency and construction methods. It is recognised to be important that to achieve higher standards of development that the necessary skills and training are available to people. It will therefore be important that the relevant stakeholders (such as the Local Authority and Further Education Establishments) ensure there are the right skills to facilitate such ambitions.

4.0 Travel, Transport and Connectivity

Structured Questions Posed

4.1 The structured questions posed at the event are set out below:

Highways

A. In highway terms, it is the intention of the Area Action Plan DPD to revisit the modelling work undertaken for the Local Plan in terms of the localised interventions proposed to increase capacity of the local road network. This includes addressing capacity issues at locations such as the Pointer Roundabout and the Hala Junction on the A6 Corridor.

What are the challenges around undertaking modelling work for the proposed growth in South Lancaster and how do we consider the implications on the surrounding road network? Do you think that capacity issues can be addressed by local interventions alone or is modal shift required as part of the solution?

Modal Shift

B. How would you define modal shift? What are the 'carrots' and what are the 'sticks' which should be offered to bring about such shifts in travel movements? Are there any adverse implications associated with the promotion of modal shift?

- C. Should the Area Action Plan include a target for modal shift? What would the implications of including such a target be? What level of shift would strike the right balance between ambition and realism?

How should such a target be established? Should the target be based on a % uplift of modal shift from the current position or is it a % over the current level of sustainable travel movements?

Sustainable / Active Travel

- D. What active and sustainable travel components should be promoted through the Area Action Plan in order to make sure that connectivity by sustainable means is available to all sections of the community, including children, the elderly and people living with disabilities?

How can sustainable and active travel networks be created and delivered to support the early stages of development in South Lancaster?

Car Parking

- E. Should car parking requirements be more restrictive in the South Lancaster area? Would it be appropriate for the Area Action Plan to champion car-free development? What would the implications of such an approach be and how could it be mitigated?

Key Issues Raised

Sharing the Same Evidential Starting Point

- 4.2 Participants felt that it was important that the work which was taking place in relation to new strategic highway infrastructure (i.e. the reconfiguration of Junction 33 and the creation of a new road through South Lancaster) and the work on the Area Action Plan needed to be cognisant and considered in a holistic manner.
- 4.3 The importance of a shared starting point (in terms of evidence and highway modelling) was seen as a critical element of this. Creation of an agreed starting point (or baseline) was seen by all as the best way to keep work on these two projects as well aligned as possible and ensure that their outcomes were supportive of each other.

Highway Modelling

- 4.4 Participants felt that it was the highway modelling and the production of a shared highway model which was the evidential basis which should be shared between both the County Council (as Highway Authority for the district) and the City Council (as Local Planning Authority). The model, and

its associated inputs, would allow both parties to share a series of mutual understandings on current and projected traffic patterns which would inform both the preparation of the Area Action Plan (in terms of understanding highway implications from new development) but also the planning application for new road infrastructure. National Highways (as strategic highway authority) also acknowledged this would be the preferred approach.

- 4.5 In terms of the assumptions which should be used for modelling, participants felt that future understanding was needed over the forecasting years in terms of the modelling. It should assess highway implications at the start and end of the development period but also set points within the development life-cycle. These set points would need to be agreed between the Highway Authority and the Local Planning Authority in order to maintain a consistent evidential approach.

Local Highway Interventions

- 4.6 All participants recognised the importance of the delivery of new strategic infrastructure in the context of new development in the South Lancaster area. However, it was recognised by all that the delivery of the strategic infrastructure identified (i.e. reconfiguration of Junction 33 and new road) was not enough in its own right. A series of locally specific highway interventions along the existing network are also required – particularly in relation to both the A6 and A588 corridors between South Lancaster and Lancaster City Centre.
- 4.7 Particular focus needs to be on improvements at a series of key pinch points, for instance the Pointer Roundabout and Hala Junction to ensure that traffic is managed in a more efficient manner. Consideration should also be given to the management of traffic along those key corridors, managing on-street parking where necessary and seeking to incentivise more sustainable forms of travel.
- 4.8 National Highways, as strategic highway authority, raised the concern that the local intervention made should not affect the operation of the strategic road network, specifically the M6. The interventions made should not result in an increase in traffic making local journeys onto the motorway.
- 4.9 It was recognised by all participants that new infrastructure, whether it be strategically or locally significant, was not fully the answer and that the role of modal shift would be critical. Given the Climate Emergency context and the increased pressures of energy and fuel, it was important that new development in South Lancaster leads to a step-change in peoples behaviours in term of how local journeys were made. Participants felt that this would be best achieved through a series of

incentives towards the use of sustainable travel ('carrots') and a series of disincentives for the use of private car ('sticks').

How to Define Modal Shift

- 4.10 All participants agreed that the definition of modal shift was challenging and was very much dependent on the specific circumstances of that locality. Ultimately modal shift, in terms of how it is defined and how it is targeted, will be different from location to location however it could be generalised as:

'Modal shift is the re-balancing of travel behaviour so that more trips are undertaken by sustainable modes of travel.'

- 4.11 Whilst the detail of the definition was a subjective one, all agreed that essentially modal shift can be recognised as moving people to a sustainable form of transport, whether that be walking, cycling or public transport (bus, rail or tram). Examples of where modal shift has been successfully achieved includes Holland, where participation in cycling and walking has increased significantly. Participants also recognised that there needed to be some element of demand management which went along with modal shift, to ensure that these alternative methods to the private car, could be efficient and convenient to users.

Setting a Modal Shift Target

- 4.12 In terms of creating a target, participants felt that it was important to have an identified and understood target within the Area Action Plan, providing something to be measured and judged against. However, there was a mixture of views on what such a target should be and whether it should be a fixed target, all recognising that a correct balance needed to be struck between a realistic yet ambitious target. Some participants felt that the role of a target could undermine the Action Plan and it would be better to consider ambitions as 'minimum requirements' rather than expressed as a 'target'.
- 4.13 Consideration should be given to what the baseline for modal shift should be? And if there is a target, then what is the mechanism for achieving that target? Whatever the mechanism should be then it needs to be achievable. Discussion raised debate about whether the modelling work would provide the correct baseline for setting a target or whether the aspirations of other documents / strategies, such as the Lancashire Cycling and Walking Strategy, a future Car Parking Strategy for Lancaster or Lancaster City Centre Movement Strategy should be the basis for any target. Whatever target is used, it should be evidentially based to ensure realism.

4.14 With regard to ambitions over modal shift targets, it was clear that the approach to defining the target should make sure of the '*Vision and Validate*' approach rather than the traditional '*Predict and Provide*'. It was important that ambitions for modal shift should start with setting a vision over where Lancaster should be in terms of Sustainable Travel in years ahead then consideration given to how that vision can be achieved.

Supporting Sustainable and Active Travel

4.15 There was significant discussion on the 'Carrots' and 'Sticks' that could seek to enable modal shift and promote sustainable and active forms of travel. It was recognised that Lancaster provided a great basis and opportunity for modal shift to be achieved, given its university location, its history as a cycling demonstration town and its strategic positioning in relation to the wider rail network. In relation to what 'carrots' and 'sticks' could include, the following points were made:

- The design and layout of new development will be critical in providing the right environment for promoting active forms of travel – particularly cycling and walking.
- New development in South Lancaster needs to deliver infrastructure to support sustainable and active travel but it needs to be the right infrastructure, don't put infrastructure in just to 'look nice', put infrastructure in to be made use of. Infrastructure and incentives should be easy, convenient, simple and accessible.
- Greater emphasis could be given to the role of the canal towpath in terms of creating cycling and walking links between South Lancaster and Lancaster City Centre. The link could be a leisure and commute route which provides an alternative to the A6 corridor. Could the role of 'water taxis' be explored?
- New residents could be given a travel pass (for example an oyster card) which incentivises the use of public transport in the city centre.
- The role of car parking, both in terms of within new development and within the city centre could dissuade the use of private cars and move people towards exploring alternatives.
- Restrictions to the private car on certain highway corridors at certain times, for instance a similar approach has been used in the centre of Preston (Fishergate).
- The establishment of a Co-Wheels scheme (or equivalent) which promotes and supports the role of car sharing and car pools.
- The role of park and ride in South Lancaster needs to be explored in terms of its implications of getting people out of the car to make journeys from Junction 33 into Lancaster University and the City Centre.

- A well thought out car parking strategy was also considered to be a critical element, the management of car parking coupled with positive alternatives can be a powerful method of achieving modal shift. Higher parking charges should be considered and more strict management of parking in inappropriate locations.
- The creation of much better cycle facilities properly maintained footways not obstructed by private cars and providing more regular, high-quality, bus services.
- The role of Local traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) should be explored along with how 20-minute neighbourhoods could reduce the need for travel by car.

4.16 There was recognition that there needs to be the right balance between ‘carrots’ and ‘sticks’ but equally that it would be challenging to implement the ‘sticks’ because they would be seeking to alter peoples travel habits. Manchester was given as an example, whereby they are seeking to implement a Clean Air Zone, but this is facing significant backlash. It was clear that any approach to achieving modal shift would require the necessary political support to the sticks being implemented and, people need to *want* to do it.

4.17 There was also a recognition that the ‘sticks’ might not necessarily apply to everyone, for instance the elderly, parents & toddlers and disabled had disproportionately more challenges cycling and walking and therefore consideration needed to be given to who would be the target audience for modal shift.

4.18 Participants recognised that the ‘Carrots’ and ‘Sticks’ needed to be viable and be better than the private car otherwise people will stay in the car. The ‘sticks’ are likely to be painful, for example removing the right to park outside homes, and would require a significant culture change. However, the benefits need to be conveyed clearly and understood, particularly in terms of improvements to the local public transport network, benefits on the wider environment, and health and wellbeing. It was clear from all participants that without the appropriate ‘sticks’ modal shift would be difficult, if not impossible, to achieve.

Reducing Emissions – Role of Electric Vehicles

4.19 Support was given to the importance of helping facilitate the transition from diesel buses to an electric fleet to support greener and cleaner forms of travel. Whilst the growth in private electric vehicles (EV) was welcomed, it was clear from participants that the increasing use of private EV was not going to solve congestion issues within the local network. We would simply be replacing a queue of petrol vehicles with a queue EVs which would still have negative impact on the environment and would not assist in achieving modal shift.

4.20 Whilst there was a recognition that charging infrastructure would be important in terms of the promotion of electric vehicles and their usage, some felt it was not for Councils to fund and facilitate and that it was the role of the private sector to provide such facilities.

Managing Car Parking & Role of Car Free Development

4.21 Participants were invited to talk about the implications of new development in South Lancaster being, in parts, car-free development. There were a range of views on the relative success or benefits to such an approach.

4.22 Some participants felt that the role of car free development would simply not work, examples of high-density inner-city areas were noted, where the absence of opportunities for parking did not stop people owning multiple vehicles and parking them on the street.

4.23 Some participants felt that car free development could work but only where it was carefully designed, meaning that there was the opportunity for parking your car but not necessarily right outside of your house. Such an approach would not rule out people owning their own car but might disincentivise it slightly.

Role of Travel Planning and Travel Plans

4.24 Travel planning was considered as a potential option in terms of setting out ambitions around modal shift and then providing the ability to measure the relative success of how those ambitions have been achieved. The implementation of any such plan, both in terms of who does it and when it is done in the development process, would need to be carefully considered.

Actions and Next Steps

4.25 Following the Thematic Discussion in relation to Travel, Transport and Connectivity and reflecting on the key issues raised by participants, the following actions have been identified in terms of actions and next steps.

Action A: When it comes to addressing matters of evidence relating to highways and the delivery of modal shift, all effort must be made to ensure that a shared evidential basis is the starting point. The starting point should include an agreed baseline (i.e. a highway model). This starting point should be an agreed starting point between both the Local Highway Authority (Lancashire County Council) and the Local Planning Authority (Lancaster City Council).

Action B: That the role of Highway modelling will be critical to understanding the opportunities and ambitions for the scale of modal shift which is both necessary and aspired to. It will be the highway modelling which will identify the implications of local intervention on the local road network, both in

terms of physical interventions to improve existing junctions but also the impacts of promoting more sustainable methods of travel. Highway modelling therefore should be a core component of any future evidential work to support the Area Action Plan in terms of travel, transport and connectivity.

Action C: That the basis for defining modal shift as part of the Area Action Plan will be as following: *‘Modal shift is the re-balancing of travel behaviour so that more trips are undertaken by sustainable modes of travel.’*

Action D: It is acknowledged that there are pro’s and con’s to setting a target for modal shift. However, on balance there are sufficient benefits in the Area Action Plan to exploring a target through a series of scenarios. Any target should be evidentially based to ensure that it strikes the correct balance between realism and ambition. The potential scenarios for a modal shift target should be explored further through the preparation of Highways evidence for the Area Action Plan and their implications discussed with the relevant highway and transport stakeholders.

Action E: All participants recognised that development in South Lancaster, and the role that the Area Action Plan can play, presents a great opportunity to change people’s behaviour in terms of promoting more sustainable and active forms of travel to make local journeys. A range of options to achieve this were presented and these should be consulted on more widely with the public.

Action F: It was also recognised that affecting change in this way would be challenging, it was not only about the promotion of sustainable forms of travel, but it was also about the dissuasion of using a private car. This would take political will and support from the public to achieve and would need to be supported by both new and existing residents. The will to enact change (and the implications of doing that) would have to be clearly supported by elected Members and the wider public through future engagement.

Action G: New development, through its design and layout should seek to support the role of electric vehicles in terms of providing the necessary infrastructure. It was recognised however that the role of electric vehicles, whilst having some degree of benefit, was not in itself an opportunity to reduce congestion and use of private vehicles. The role of charging infrastructure should be considered through the allocation process (i.e. ensuring charging points at trip-generators) and through design coding of new development.

Action H: Car free development should be explored through the design coding process but should not inhibit the ownership of vehicles, as this may lead to wider challenges in relation to unlawful parking. However, through the design and layout of development, consideration should be given to

how car parking could be used to disincentivise car ownership (i.e. parking which is not directly outside the home).

5.0 Natural Environment and Green & Blue Infrastructure

5.1 Given the scope and breadth of this topic area, it was decided that in terms of the interactive discussions, that this session should be split into two separate themes – Biodiversity and Water Management. Participants were split into breakout groups based on their relevant background and experience. This section and the feedback provided has been split up accordingly based on the discussion around these two themes.

Structured Questions Posed (Biodiversity Session)

The structured questions posed at the event are set out below:

Green and Blue Infrastructure (General)

- A. What do you think are the key issues in terms of Green & Blue Infrastructure (GBI) which need to be addressed through the preparation of the Area Action Plan? What specific opportunities do you think exist within the South Lancaster area to promote GBI?
- B. Are there any projects that the Council should be aware of (either short, medium, or long term) which may have implications, both positive or negative, on delivery of a holistic and comprehensive GBI Strategy for South Lancaster?

Biodiversity and Landscape

- C. The Area Action Plan will seek to explore the opportunities for net gain in line with the expectations and ambitions of the Environment Bill. Should opportunities be explored for net gain beyond the required 10%?

What do you feel the opportunities and challenges will be in terms of setting a high requirement? When considering South Lancaster what opportunities do you think exist to secure net gain and create new habitats?
- D. A development in South Lancaster will look to create a separate, visually distinct settlement. How do you feel that this can be best achieved and what policy mechanisms / land-use management could be used to achieve this?
- E. Are there any landscapes in the South Lancaster area which would benefit from local landscape designations? How do you feel that new development should reflect the landscape which they are situated in (for instance in term of massing, orientation, layout, materials etc)?

Are you aware of any other landscape principles that should be considered in preparing the Area Action Plan?

- F. Do you have any views on how green and blue infrastructure should be managed in the long-term?

Structured Questions (Water Management Session)

The structured questions posed at the event are set out below:

Green and Blue Infrastructure (General)

- A. What do you think are the key issues in terms of Green & Blue Infrastructure (GBI) which need to be addressed through the preparation of the Area Action Plan? What specific opportunities do you think exist within the South Lancaster area to promote GBI?
- B. Are there any projects that the Council should be aware of (either short, medium, or long term) which may have implications, both positive or negative, on delivery of a holistic and comprehensive GBI Strategy for South Lancaster?

The Management of Water

- C. Do you think that the ambitions for flood risk and drainage, as set out the in the Climate Review of the Local Plan, will be adequate to address the existing issues in South Lancaster which may arise from Climate Change over the development life-cycle or should we go further?
- D. Do you think that water should be managed strategically or on a site-by-site basis or a mixture of both? What do you think the implications are from any of the approaches described?
- E. Should the Area Action Plan be setting out a range of water management components and design criteria that would be expected from development in South Lancaster? If so, what components should be prioritised, and should it be identified as a hierarchy?

Key Issues Raised

- 5.2 With regard to discussion and debate within the **Biodiversity** group, the following key issues were raised by participants.

Need for a Strategic Approach and the Promotion of Multi-Functional Benefits

- 5.3 All participants agreed the need for a strategic approach in relation to biodiversity across the SG1 area. This would ensure that the most appropriate locations are selected for enhancement. Such an approach would also provide the opportunity to deliver a wide range of benefits which are not just

restricted to ecological gains. This could include benefits in relation to flood protection, recreational benefits, carbon sequestration and water quality. The opportunity to secure multifunctional benefits should be sought wherever possible.

- 5.4 Sustainable transport corridors were specifically highlighted as having significant potential to combine multi-functional GBI with low-carbon modes of travel, to support modal shift and to help reduce urban heat island effects.
- 5.5 Participants noted that there is a danger that development sites already in the planning system may compromise the ability to deliver a holistic strategy across the SG1 area.
- 5.6 The preparation of an overarching GBI Strategy for the AAP was welcomed. The potential for a Tree, Woodland, Hedgerows and Landscaping sub-strategy was highlighted.

The need to share Data and Expertise

- 5.7 The discussions highlighted the wealth of knowledge and data that already exists. Opportunity to work together and share this resource should be sought wherever possible.
- 5.8 This was noted to be especially relevant in relation to the work of the County Council. A joined-up approach to biodiversity was highlighted as necessary in relation to the consideration of development parcels and the construction of the highway network. Wherever opportunity to extract additional green and blue infrastructure should be sought. These should be brought forward in parallel rather than as separate processes.
- 5.9 The opportunity for a joint design code was highlighted.
- 5.10 Participants noted that the AAP provides the opportunity for better connectivity across all green and blue infrastructure types and all delivery partners. For example, using Sustainable Urban Drainage to provide better drainage and at the same time connect habitats and deliver biodiversity net gain.

The Need to Work with Landowners

- 5.11 Participants noted that the AAP needs to work with farmers and landowners to understand existing land management practices. There needs to be increased engagement with them so that landowners understand how they can improve existing habitats even where land may not be identified specifically for enhancement.
- 5.12 Participants also believed that the AAP should deliver a more proactive approach to finding land on offer for rewilding.

Role of Functional Linked Land (FLL)

- 5.13 Participants noted that there is potential for some areas of SG1 to be functionally linked to nearby Special Protection Areas. The potential for this will need to be assessed and considered through the AAP process.
- 5.14 Where possible opportunity to improve habitats for birds should be sought. Consideration of public access points will also need to be carefully considered through this process. Participants also noted that areas of open space should be planned as Suitable Alternative Natural Green Spaces (SANGs). This would help to draw recreational pressure away from designated sites and other environmentally sensitive areas, such as the three Ancient Woodland sites lying within the AAP zone of influence.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)

- 5.15 The discussions noted that the County Council have been appointed as the responsible authority to lead the preparation of the Lancashire LNRS. Whilst the AAP is running ahead of the LNRS there remains opportunity to engage with the County and others regarding the direction and future content of this strategy. The need to balance how the strategic approach in the AAP will fit with the LNRS was highlighted.
- 5.16 Participants also noted that the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the Nature Recovery Network may have implications for the type of biodiversity net gain units which will be delivered.

Habitat Opportunities

- 5.17 Participants noted that there is potential in the area for basin mires in the SG1 area.
- 5.18 Opportunities for buffering around the canal should be sought. Some participants felt that the canal paths could be wider. There is noted to be opportunity to have woodland and wetland either side of the canal to create better linkages.
- 5.19 The need for better protection of ancient woodlands within the AAP was highlighted. Participants advised that there is opportunity to link up existing areas of ancient woodland. The issue of recreational pressure in respect of ancient woodlands was also noted. This is believed to be a growing issue with people increasingly accessing these areas.
- 5.20 Participants believed that there was potential for grasslands to be less intensively grazed within the SG1 area.

- 5.21 Additional areas of wetland could be created. Noted that flood mapping shows those areas which potentially lend themselves to wetland.
- 5.22 Whilst the creation of new habitats is important, participants noted the need for these to be carefully designed and created in dialogue with relevant stakeholders. For example, participants would not want to see new habitats created that encouraged the movement of species such as bats and owls flying onto the M6. This could be an issue where connecting habitats are created.
- 5.23 It was also recommended that green wedges be incorporated into development parcels. In discussing this, participants noted that the location of housing needs to bear in mind that residents backing onto open greenspaces may extend their boundary into the greenspace, and they may in some instances fly tip. It was considered better for houses to face important habitats.

Historic Assets

- 5.24 The need to take account of the historic landscape was highlighted. This included the Roman road. Participants believed that there are likely to be many other resources which are yet to be identified.

Management and Maintenance

- 5.25 The AAP will need to be clear on who is responsible for the maintenance and management of natural resources. Contributions will be required to secure long-term maintenance and management.
- 5.26 The need to have a clear plan for management failures and maintenance contractors that might go bust was also highlighted.
- 5.27 Opportunities to establish a Management Company/Trust should be explored.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 5.28 The importance of the mitigation hierarchy was highlighted. The first step should be avoidance.
- 5.29 Participants noted the need for a strategic approach to BNG across the SG1 area.
- 5.30 The discussions noted the need to make people aware that this is a potential additional source of income for landowners. It provides an opportunity for landowners whose land lends itself to restoration.
- 5.31 Participants called for BNG to be displayed to developers as an opportunity to potentially increase house prices, add value, enable flood mitigation and potentially reduce flood risk in the future.
- 5.32 Participants believed that the opportunity to deliver something special in South Lancaster should be sought. This may be achieved by going above the 10% BNG requirement.

- 5.33 It was noted that it could be difficult to go beyond 15%. It may be possible to go above the statutory 10% BNG for certain habitat types only. The setting of a higher requirement for BNG will need to be supported by evidence. This could include a Need and Supply analysis exercise within the AAP area, in addition to the Biodiversity Net Gain work being undertaken by RSK Wilding in support of the AAP.
- 5.34 The opportunity to establish a Habitat Bank for this area should be investigated. This would have to be clearly marked in the mapping, with clear ownership of the land shown from the outset. Habitat banks could be established for certain habitat types.
- 5.35 The need for biodiversity units to reflect full costs was also discussed. This includes management and maintenance costs. Units should not be costed only on creation costs.

Open Space Provision

- 5.36 Additional recreational and open space needs to be included in the AAP. Existing provision in adjacent areas and at Lancaster University would be unable to cope with the additional usage that is likely to exist without additional provision.
- 5.37 The need to provide enough sports facilities of the right quality and type in the right place was noted to be vital in the preparation of the AAP. Positive planning for sport, protection from the unnecessary loss of sports facilities, along with an integrated approach to providing new housing and employment land with community facilities was identified as being important.

Implications for the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

- 5.38 The need to consider whether the emerging proposals would have a significant impact on or harm the statutory purpose of the nearby AONB was also noted.
- 5.39 With regard to discussion and debate within the **Water Management** group, the following key issues were raised by participants.

Preparing an Area Wide Drainage Strategy

- 5.40 Participants recognised the importance of an area wide drainage strategy for South Lancaster which looks at how water will be managed across the entire area (the whole Broad Location for Growth). This should look at the impacts of water (i.e. the risks of flooding from all sources) and how that should be managed to ensure an effective SuDS strategy across the area, identifying how and where water should be stored and identifying a hierarchy for what features should be used to allow for storage. When considering sources of flood risk, landowners and the community should be engaged

to identify risks not identified on EA flood maps (those that may come and go depending upon storm rainfall surface water).

- 5.41 All agreed that this holistic approach to water management would be critical, ensuring that water was managed on site and capacity was available for water to move downstream. Options for water management upstream of development areas and the designation of land for water management and safeguarding for future flood risk management works should be explored. Integration of water management throughout the area, including between the new roads and development should be explored. The strategy could also link into work on the Green / Blue Infrastructure Strategy which could promote and identify areas for multi-functional benefits (including water storage and the linked biodiversity benefits).
- 5.42 Consideration needs to be given to having an understanding of how water moves around this area, understand where the water lands and manage it as close to source as possible. Water should be re-used first then storage, infiltration and sources of discharge explored to make use of the proposed Climate Emergency Review of the Local Plan drainage hierarchy. Finally, if we are going to discharge water from the area, where will the water go to? Is it into a watercourse or elsewhere? Development must respect existing surface water catchments and flow routes and be situated away from water courses.
- 5.43 The strategy may be able to deliver a 'Water Course Survey' or perhaps this could be considered at a later stage through the application process when more detail is known.
- 5.44 An understanding of riparian ownership and rights will be needed to ensure parcels may discharge to watercourses. It was clear that developers who sought to use ordinary watercourses for discharge need to talk to the relevant owners and authorities up front to ensure that this is achievable. The drainage strategy must be linked to deliverability and riparian ownership to ensure that drainage will not be held to ransom.
- 5.45 The drainage strategy should include a sustainable drainage hierarchy and highlight the types of SuDS, the design criteria considered appropriate, and make expectations clear. Concern was expressed about the plethora of guidance, and it was suggested that SuDS guidance should be wrapped up in wider intrinsic design documents and linked with highways, green infrastructure, plot and street design, rather than separating it out. It was stressed that SuDS design must be integrated early into the design process. It was suggested that the Scottish Gov NPPF4 is consulted for SuDS criteria.

5.46 The need to manage development and water in phases to ensure a cohesive approach was highlighted. Funding and cost recovery should be explored to ensure multiple phases work together and cross funded where necessary. Funding for upstream water management should also be considered as they may provide greater benefits.

Other Relevant Schemes and Projects

5.47 The Environment Agency identified that the work which has been ongoing in relation to Burrow Beck and Galgate around the implications of flooding will be of relevance to work on the Area Action Plan. Whilst downstream from the proposed development, the ambition for holistic planning in relation to water management means that the relationship between the two aspects of work will be significant.

Balancing the Quantity of Water against the Quality of Water

5.48 Participants recognised the importance of water quality, the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) have prepared a 'SuDS Proforma' which provides a range of solutions for improving water quality. The LLFA consider it important that the proforma becomes an integral part of the planning process.

5.49 It was suggested that the AAP and development must look at the way land adjacent to watercourses is used and how it can be managed to prevent pollution, controls rates and improve water quality. Areas adjacent to watercourses should be protected and provide opportunity for habitat creation, such as riparian woodland planting.

5.50 While a strategic approach is necessary, water should be managed at source within treatment trains to improve water quality.

Management of Existing Water Courses

5.51 The AAP must protect existing surface water catchments, flow paths, watercourses and their floodplains. Culverts should be removed and naturized and new culverts should be avoided.

Flow Rates

5.52 The LLFA highlighted the importance of thinking about implications of flow rates on local watercourses and water bodies. Consideration needs to be given over whether these features have the capacity to take water and whether limiting flows would adversely affect water quality. There are challenges elsewhere in Lancashire where watercourses cannot discharge the amount of water they are seeking to take.

5.53 There are challenges in making sure that developers consider the implications of discharge beyond the red-edge of their planning application. A holistic approach is needed to this issue which could be

addressed through the preparation of a comprehensive drainage strategy. The strategy needs to ensure that there is capacity downstream to take discharge, coupled with approaches over how discharge can be moderated within the development itself.

- 5.54 When considering flow rates, it will be important to plan for the correct Climate Change allowance. Whilst national policy plans for 1 in 100 year events many storms now exceed this. Could the Area Action Plan look to increase this allowance to 1 in 200 year and incorporate further areas of multi-functional GBI which can serve, in part, a water storage purpose? The storm event for SuDS storage needs to be made clear and the layout of development designed to ensure flooding does not occur up to the event. It's important that the Plan makes expectations clear for all parties and makes clear what the land requirements will be.
- 5.55 The rates set out in the Climate Emergency Review of the Local Plan were considered appropriate but additional provision should be made within the AAP area, and both upstream and downstream for additional flood risk mitigation. The provision of off-site flood storage and natural flood risk management, especially upstream of the AAP area and within the AAP where this will reduce flood risk to existing and new communities, should be explored and required where appropriate. The AAP can be used to set out requirements and safeguard land.

Relationship with GBI and Biodiversity Enhancement

- 5.56 The creation of multifunctional water management incorporated into mixed green and blue infrastructure to provide biodiversity enhancement was considered critical. GBI should be designed around the areas which provide biodiversity and either currently hold water during storm event or would based upon climate change allowances. It was highlighted that it is important not to forget site specific standards for BGI, a strategic BGI network will not work if not also connected within individual sites.

Role of Energy Generation

- 5.57 Participants highlighted that water management features have the potential to provide renewable energy at various scales for example small scale hydro within storage areas can be used to power lighting.

Implementation of a Sustainability Hierarchy

- 5.58 The use of above ground multifunctional SuDS in line with the Climate Emergency Local Plan Review sustainable drainage hierarchy was considered important. This will provide a range of benefits. The

AAP should clearly set out the expectations and design criteria to promote above ground and shallow infiltration SuDS to deliver interception and source control.

Management of Sustainable Drainage Features

- 5.59 The need to consider long term management and maintenance was emphasised, especially with riparian ownership and ensuring water courses and land are managed. There need to be greater awareness of other consenting regimes.
- 5.60 The AAP needs to raise awareness of the consents/permits required from LLFA and EA for works to watercourses.

Actions and Next Steps

- 5.61 The thematic discussions provided a useful starting point for informing the future content of the AAP. In the context of the natural environment the discussions confirmed the importance of a nature led approach highlighting the need to work with nature to secure multi-functional benefits and importantly the need to preserve and enhance green and blue infrastructure resources across the SG1 area. Participants were very clear that the AAP should start with nature.
- 5.62 Following the Thematic Discussion and reflecting on the key issues raised by participants, the following actions have been identified in terms of actions and next steps.

Action A: Establishment of a strategic approach for the management of the natural environment. The provision of a strategic approach will ensure that locations are not considered in isolation and that opportunities to maximise benefits are secured. In following this approach, opportunities for enhancement will be directed to where they are needed and where benefits can be maximised.

- 5.63 Central to this approach will be the provision of a robust evidence base. This will be key in understanding the environmental characteristics of the AAP area and understanding those areas that should be protected as well as those areas that offer most opportunity for enhancement.

Action B: Investigate the establishment of a joint design guide/strategy with the County Council. Planning for the highway infrastructure associated with the Garden Village should not be undertaken in isolation from the AAP. There is clearly opportunity to consider opportunities for off-setting together and, wherever possible, opportunity to extract additional green and blue infrastructure should be sought.

5.64 The two projects should be brought forward in parallel rather than as separate processes with each offering the opportunity to assist in a more co-ordinated approach to delivering environmental gains and better land use planning.

Action C: Engage with landowners to understand existing land management practices and better understand where opportunities exist to improve habitats as part of a wider strategy for the natural environment. Engagement with landowners will also help understand where land is available for off-setting. It will also help understanding of where action should be targeted to maximise environmental benefits.

Action D: Prepare the evidence base to support the delivery of BNG. This will include exploring opportunities for Habitat Banking as well as identifying where areas are available for off-site provision. It will help to understand what opportunities exist to set a higher requirement.

Action E: Address issues emerging from the Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA). The Local Plan HRA identified a number of potential pathways through which there was potential for significant effects on designated sites. The AAP will be supported by its own HRA. Potential impacts include additional recreational disturbance impacts on nearby designated sites (and land which is functionally linked to those sites) associated with the increased residential development proposed within the AAP area. The potential for this will need to be explored.

Action F: Maximise opportunities to strengthen GBI. The thematic workshop confirmed the importance of a robust GBI strategy for the AAP area. Participants confirmed the need to extract opportunities for GBI wherever possible, improving and enhancing existing linkages and providing new provision. The AAP must ensure that GBI throughout the area and between development sites is connected.

Action G: Establishment of a strategic approach for the water management – the provision of a strategic approach will ensure that locations are not considered in isolation and that opportunities to maximise benefits are secured. In following this approach, opportunities for flood mitigation will be directed to where they are needed and where benefits can be maximised.

5.65 Central to this approach will be the provision of a robust evidence base. This will be key in understanding the water environment characteristics of the AAP area and understanding those areas where development should be avoided, where flood risk mitigation would be appropriate and provide wider benefits, areas that should be protected as well as those areas that offer most opportunity for enhancement. Working with the County Council to develop a strategic approach which addresses the highway works and development parcels will be important.

5.66 The first stage will be to identify all sources of flood risk using existing data, the highest level of climate change and storm allowances and with the engagement of statutory consultees, landowners and the community. This will ensure all risks are understood, the development of areas at risk of flooding from any source now or in the future can be avoided, and opportunities for flood mitigation and safeguarding of land for further flood mitigation can be identified and land safeguarded.

Action H: Identification of a sustainable drainage hierarchy in policy which prioritises above ground multifunctional SuDS with pollution control/reduction and biodiversity enhancement integrated into the overall blue and green infrastructure.

Action I: Consider and manage through policy the use of land adjacent to watercourses and SuDS to control and reduce pollution.

Action J: Identification of specific SuDS considered acceptable and clearly set out the design and technical specifications required within policy and associated documents.

5.67 Key to ensuring the detail is appropriate will be drafting policies and guidance in conjunction with LLFA/EA/UU. This will ensure design and technical details accord with national and local guidance, where possible go beyond these requirements to reduce flood risk and ensure adoptable standards. Design and technical requirements should be integrated into a single design guide for the AAP area which address all design matters to avoid a plethora of guidance.

Action K: Draft and include measures to reduce flood risk to existing and new communities within and outside the AAP area. To do this the following measures should be considered and supported by evidence:

- identification and safeguarding of land for flood mitigation measures to be implemented through development within the AAP area, the safeguarding of land for future potential flood mitigation works to reduce flood risk and ways to provide for flood mitigation within the higher parts of the catchments.
- provision for natural flood management to capture and slow water within overall GBI.
- ensure the protection of existing surface water catchments, flow paths, watercourses and their floodplains and the removal/naturalisation of culverts.
- increasing the storm event for flood design and ensure SuDS store water and sites are design to not to flood up to the same event.

Action L: Consider the potential for the use of SuDS and water courses to generate renewable energy and for rainwater harvesting to irrigate growing spaces.

Action M: Set out requirements for the management and maintenance of SuDS long term. This should prioritise the development of SuDS to adoptable standards with SuDS subsequently being offered for adoption. Consideration should be given to various forms of adoption, a single management company for BGV and securing contributions for maintenance.

Action N: Consider cross subsidy/funding/contributions for off-site flood mitigation, including sites outside the AAP area where it will benefit wider reduction of flood risk to existing and new communities.

6.0 Infrastructure Delivery

Structured Questions Posed

6.1 The structured questions posed at the event are set out below:

- A.** The following list is the City Council’s infrastructure expectations for South Lancaster which will be pursued through the Area Action Plan. Do you feel these represent realistic expectations? Do you feel that anything has been missed? Can you expand on the requirements for any of these infrastructure types?

TRANSPORT	Roads	Bus Services & Bus Stops
New footpaths / Cycle paths	Footpath / Cycle Path Enhancement	Car / Cycle Clubs & Hubs
EV Charging & Infrastructure		
FACILITIES	Education land and buildings	Community Centre
Healthcare land and buildings		
UTILITIES	Foul Drainage	Water Supply
Telecommunication Masts	Electricity Sub-Stations & Cabling	Broadband
ENVIRONMENT	Sustainable Drainage	Play Areas
Flood Risk Mitigation	Biodiversity Net Gain Opportunities	Playing Pitches
Parks and Gardens	Allotments / Community Gardens	Amenity Open Space
ENERGY GENERATION	District Heating Networks	Community Renewables

Table 6.1: Infrastructure Expectations for South Lancaster

- B.** Based on the above, what do you feel the infrastructure priorities for South Lancaster should be?
- C.** With regard to the phasing of new development, do you have any views on when specific infrastructure should be provided within the development life-cycle in order to make sure that infrastructure is delivered in the right place and at the right time?

Key Issues Raised at the Event

Additional Infrastructure Expectations

6.2 Participants broadly considered the infrastructure expectations set out in Table 6.1 above, however, noted that the following additions should be given consideration:

- Local Centre provision.
- Opportunities for micro energy generation – for instance battery storage, solar and PV.
- Improved travel linkages towards Morecambe and Heysham
- The creation of small-scale employment and retail units for local businesses
- Infrastructure relating to watercourses, for instance new bridges and culverts.
- Consideration of new rail linkages along the West Coast Mainline
- Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure, particularly at the locations of key services.
- Improvements to Lancaster Canal to enhance its role as a sustainable travel corridor.
- The provision of indoor leisure facilities.
- The provision of woodlands and private gardens to promote mental well-being.
- The provision of public art within areas of public realm

Infrastructure Priorities in South Lancaster

6.3 The importance of providing healthcare was recognised as an important component of new development in South Lancaster, it was considered important that as the demand for services changed, that the facilities required were in the right places. Any new facilities will need to be well located within any new settlement and ensure that it offers the right services. Development in South Lancaster would possibly provide the opportunity for the consolidation of services.

6.4 It was also reflected by all participants that the services provided in new development, whether that be education, health etc needed to be well connected and accessible. This meant both in terms of its location – i.e. in an accessible location which can be accessed by all sections of the community by a range of travel modes.

6.5 Education was raised as a key infrastructure component and needs to be considered for delivery early on in the process. Key issues will be identifying who is going to provide the site, who funds the school and associated build costs and identifying any viability issues. Participants from the education authority indicated that assessment of need would be based on the ‘worst-case scenario’ with a more detailed and accurate calculation of need undertaken at a planning application stage.

- 6.7 With both education and health, the type of housing which was to be proposed would be key to understanding demand and need. More larger family housing would indicate greater demands for school places, more specialist housing may indicate greater demands on healthcare.
- 6.8 With regard to water management, it was seen as important for a comprehensive drainage strategy to be multi-functional in terms of its relationship with wider Green / Blue Infrastructure ambitions and the enhancement of biodiversity. The management and maintenance of these features would be critical to achieving these multi-functional benefits. The wider drainage strategy will allow a greater understanding of how water moves through both the wider site and also specific allocations of land.
- 6.9 Utilities infrastructure and its delivery was also picked up by participants. The installation of foul drainage and a co-ordinated approach in terms of water system delivery would be an essential component of development. Whilst all participants recognised that it was the Local Planning Authority who would have to take the lead role in bringing stakeholders together, some participants questioned how this could be fairly achieved and whether the authority have sufficient powers to co-ordinate a strategic and holistic approach to this. Reference was made to the importance of a co-ordinated approach to water management between the development itself and the new spine road running through the site. It was seen as important that the water management schemes for both projects were seen as complimentary to each other and did not detract from each other.

Increased demand for water and climate impacts is challenging. The optional water efficiency requirement of 110ltr is not significant. The ability to go further with water recycling and reuse should be explored to reduce pressures on demand.

- 6.10 It was felt with utilities that stakeholder co-ordination was key to gain governance and structure around a proposed approach, there needed to be engagement with landowners and the development industry to re-iterate the need for collaborative working to realise the ambitions for South Lancaster, this meant the need to address issues around land equalisation.

The Phasing of New Infrastructure

- 6.11 All participants recognised the need for balance in terms of when is the right time to deliver new infrastructure. There needs to be critical mass – i.e. there needs to be sufficient people to use the new facilities – and it needs to be future proofed for further growth in the future.
- 6.12 When considering when new infrastructure is needed there is a need to look at the district level and at current demands and capacity. In terms of addressing the questions over when infrastructure should be delivered, some participants felt that more information was needed in terms of numbers

of people (residents) and houses before they could provide more detail on what was needed and when.

- 6.13 With regard to utilities infrastructure, future proofing was again thought to be key, particularly in the context of rapidly changing demands and technologies. Work would be needed to ensure that the networks provided had the necessary adaptability for change in order to accommodate the latest technologies. This was also highlighted to be the case in relation to charging infrastructure for electric vehicles.
- 6.14 For transport infrastructure, participants felt that perhaps the element of ‘critical mass’ was less essential. Importantly, the installation of high-quality sustainable travel networks perhaps was more important to be delivered in the early phases of development to ensure greatest opportunity to encourage positive behaviours and use of active / sustainable travel early on in the process. Perhaps the late inclusion of such features may make the achievement of modal shift more difficult.
- 6.15 Most participants felt that the timing of road delivery (and how it is delivered) would be a crucial factor in terms of phasing of wider infrastructure, both in terms of how it is delivered and where it is delivered. Again, it is critical that there is a cognisance between the work which is ongoing for the road (in terms of design, role and function) and the work on the Area Action Plan. It was recognised that the road is designed through the collaboration of all relevant parties.

Land Equalisation

- 6.16 All participants recognised the challenges around land equalisation and ensuring a co-ordinated approach, particularly where there are a number of separate developers.

Protection and Upgrading of Existing Infrastructure

- 6.17 Consideration needs to be given to the position of existing infrastructure so that we are not placing infrastructure on top of old. Importantly, clarity would be important in terms of where development is not going to go and whether infrastructure networks could run through these locations.
- 6.18 It needs to be clear early on whether protection measures are needed, for instance the need for diversions as protection measures can be expensive. Challenges like this should not be left till later in the Area Action Plan process.

Actions and Next Steps

- 6.19 Following the Thematic Discussion in relation to Infrastructure delivery and reflecting on the key issues raised by participants, the following actions have been identified in terms of actions and next steps.

Action A: That an updated list of infrastructure expectations is prepared and consulted on to ensure that the wider community have the opportunity to reflect on the scale of infrastructure which is anticipated to be provided as part of the Area Action Plan process and provide the opportunity to identify any further gaps in infrastructure provision.

Action B: That careful consideration is given to what the priorities for infrastructure in South Lancaster should be, reflecting on the fact that some require ‘critical mass’ before being delivered and that some need to be established early to enact social changes early in the development life-cycle. The Council should, along with infrastructure partners, seek to draw up a range of priorities which can be consulted on with the wider public in due course. It was recognised that these may be updated in the future when more was known about phasing.

Action C: Phasing of development would be critical in defining how and when infrastructure would be needed to support development. It is therefore important that the Local Planning Authority seek to advance plans over phasing as soon as possible to ensure that infrastructure can be factored in a timely and appropriate manner.

Action D: Further work is necessary to explore the matter of land equalisation and its implications. This required further engagement with the development industry on this matter, with the City Council seeking to take a lead on discussions.

Action E: It is imperative that throughout the process of preparing the Area Action Plan there is consistent and co-ordinated engagement with infrastructure providers to ensure that (a) the content and direction of the emerging Area Action Plan is clearly understood and (b) that the infrastructure requirements which are needed to make development acceptable are cognisant with the expectations of the planning framework.

7.0 Community Resilience

Structured Questions Posed

7.1 The structured questions posed at the event are set out below:

- A. Where do you see strong community involvement in delivering the net zero ambitions of the Area Action Plan in South Lancaster? What are the ways in which the climate emergency can be front and centre of the community building in South Lancaster? What are some of the risks and tensions?

- How would you like to see climate resilience implemented in South Lancaster? And what role do you see the community playing in this? Are there likely to be any projects or groups we should be aware of in terms of establishing climate resilience in the South Lancaster area?
- B.** What sort of renewable energy sources would you prioritise in South Lancaster? Do you have any views on how community energy projects could be supported?
- C.** We would like to see residential and commercial development in South Lancaster go beyond the energy efficiency requirements set out in the Climate Review of the Local Plan. Are there green building benchmarks that you feel should be explored as part of delivering climate resilient and energy efficient sustainable buildings?
- D.** What sort of food growing spaces would you like to see? What sort of composting systems do you think would work best (individual, group – at an allotment, community – collected to a central spot for free-takin, giving to horticulture industry etc)?
- E.** Is there a need for a community centre, with some focus on sustainability and climate? Such as for training up ‘green skills’, repair cafes, makers space, community kitchen, tool or toy libraries, bicycle sharing and such.
- What enterprises and workspaces would you like to see delivered? Are you aware of emerging enterprises that need workspaces and what would that look like?
 - What skills / education are needed to ensure the success of the development in responding to climate change post-occupation?

Key Issues Raised at the Event

Establishing a Community

- 7.2 Participants raised the issues that it was challenging to discuss ideas around community involvement until some form of community had been established as part of new development and the scope and scale of facilities to be provided in South Lancaster has been identified. It will clearly be important to have the critical mass of facilities in South Lancaster to ensure the essential needs of the community can be addressed locally, however it will be important that the new community also engage and interact with the facilities provided in the wider district, particularly Lancaster City Centre.

Community Based Projects

- 7.3 It will be important that consideration is given to how the community can get involved in a broad range of projects and initiatives. That could include things like locally-based food production or

locally-based energy generation, an example of where the community have got involved in such a way has been the Halton Community Hydro Scheme. In the context of energy generation, the roles of district heating could play a similar role and have multiple benefits, not only bringing the community together but also seeking to address fuel inequalities.

The Role of the Circular Economy

- 7.4 Participants emphasised the role of the circular economy to try and improve local involvement in supply chains, the Eden North Project was considered to be a significant opportunity to establish this with growth in South Lancaster ultimately benefiting from this, particularly in relation to the green construction techniques, and the skills and training agenda. Reference was made to the Morecambe Bay Curriculum which has been successful in engaging local people and how its visions can be applied to South Lancaster.
- 7.5 It was highlighted that growth in South Lancaster was accompanied with local opportunities for jobs for the whole cross section of the community. Whilst it was recognised that planning can only play a part in facilitating this, it was recognised that the Area Action Plan needed to investigate the role of employment hubs and agile spaces to help people to work locally and agilely, particularly with the increase in home-working.

Future-Proofing

- 7.5 Participants identified the need for development to be future-proofed so that it could adapt to change over its life-cycle. This concept of future-proofing was recognised to apply to a range of different aspects from addressing the implications of the Climate Emergency to being flexible enough to adapt to changes in the economy, the COVID Pandemic and its implications on the economy being highlighted as one examples of where future-proofing was considered to be important.

Key Issues Raised in Written Feedback

- 7.6 Following the Thematic Discussion in relation to Community Resilience and reflecting on the key issues raised by participants, the following actions have been identified in terms of actions and next steps.

Action A: Recognising that establishing a new community and the networks which make it take time, it will be important to have some degree of a plan for how a new community should evolve. This will include the provision of physical infrastructure but will also involve highlighting opportunities to create social networks.

Action B: Investigate the opportunity for community-based projects which can be established through the development process and then supported in the long-term by the new community, for instance looking at locally led energy generation and heating projects.

Action C: Ensure that growth in South Lancaster provides an appropriate mix of both housing and employment to ensure that it is truly sustainable. The role of the local economy should be well investigated to ensure that the right elements of employment / workspaces are provided within new development.

Action D: It is important that all elements of the Area Action Plan are carefully considered to ensure that its ambitions, vision, and objectives are future-proofed to react positively towards change.

8.0 Outcomes and Next Steps

- 8.1 The Thematic Discussions which have been described in this report represent the first stage of the informal engagement process which will be used to inform the Area Action Plan Process. It has provided the opportunity for key stakeholders and organisations to provide input on a range of key issues which are pertinent to the preparation of a new Planning Framework for this area.
- 8.2 The actions which have been described in this report will be given further consideration as the preparation moves forward, both in terms of seeking to address any issues through the evidence base which is being prepared for support the Area Action Plan or further exploration of these matters through future engagement stages.