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Dear Carole Crookes,

LANCASTER LOCAL PLAN: CLIMATE EMERGENCY REVIEW OF THE STRATEGIC POLICIES AND LAND ALLOCATIONS DPD AND THE DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT DPD

Thank you for consulting with the Home Builders Federation (HBF) on the Climate Emergency Review of the Lancaster District Strategic Policies and Land Allocations DPD and the Development Management DPD.

The HBF is the principal representative body of the house-building industry in England and Wales. Our representations reflect the views of our membership, which includes multi-national PLC's, regional developers and small, local builders. In any one year, our members account for over 80% of all new "for sale" market housing built in England and Wales as well as a large proportion of newly built affordable housing.

The HBF would like to submit the following comments on selected questions posed within the Inspector's Matters, Issues and Questions.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joanne Harding', is positioned below the 'Yours sincerely,' text.

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Matter 2: Climate Change and Economic Prosperity

Issue: Are the proposed policies on climate change and economic prosperity justified, effective and consistent with national policy?

2.1 Is Policy CC1 justified, effective and consistent with national policy, including paragraph 16 of the Framework?

1. The HBF does not consider that CC1 is consistent with national policy in the NPPF which states that Plans should serve a clear purpose, avoiding unnecessary duplication of policies that apply to a particular area and should contain policies that are clearly written and unambiguous so it is evident how a decision maker should react to development proposals¹. The HBF recommends that this policy is deleted.
2. The HBF generally supports sustainable development and considers that the homebuilding industry can help to address some of the climate change emergency challenges identified by the Council. However, the HBF considers that this policy is more of a statement of intent or vision rather than a policy and does not consider that it is necessary, and it repeats a lot of the elements of the policies that are detailed elsewhere in the Plan.
3. If the policy is to be retained the HBF considers that the policy should incorporate further flexibility and should include consideration of the impacts on viability of the delivery of this policy. The HBF recommends that in particular part 3 of the policy should be amended as follows:
 - *All development **should** integrate the principles of sustainable design and construction into the design of proposals, **subject to the site's location, design, viability and other sustainability benefits arising from the proposed scheme.***

2.2 Is Policy SP4 justified, effective and consistent with national policy? Is the final bullet point of Policy SP4 appropriately drafted?

2.3 Would Policy SP4 allow for renewable energy projects to come forward in areas which form part of green and blue infrastructure networks?

2.4 Has sufficient consideration been given in Policy SP4 to the effect of major renewable energy projects on existing businesses locally?

2.5 Do the requirements of Policy SP9 duplicate other policies?

4. The Council have added a section to this policy that looks for new development to be resilient to Climate Change, with a developments ability to mitigate and adapt to climate change as a golden thread. The HBF considers that elements such as climate change resilience, low carbon and energy efficiency are already covered in CC1, therefore the

¹ NPPF 2021 paragraph 16.

level of duplication in relation to the Plan may be limited in CC1 were to be removed as a policy and instead included as vision statement or statement of intent.

5. The HBF generally supports the provision of low-carbon, energy efficient homes, however, the HBF considers that this should be done in line with Government plans to introduce this through national standards and building regulations. This helps to avoid unnecessary duplication or inconsistencies in policies.

2.6 Is new criterion V of Policy DM57 on resilience to climate change justified?

2.7 Do the requirements of criterion IX of Policy DM57 unnecessarily duplicate the requirements of policies on transport?

Matter 3: Sustainable Design, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

Issue: Whether the policies relating to sustainable design, energy efficiency and renewable energy are positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy

3.1 Is Policy DM29 positively prepared, justified, effective, and consistent with national policy?

1. The HBF does not consider that the policy is justified or consistent with national policy, as the HBF has concerns that the whilst the policy is aspirational it will not be deliverable and that it is not always apparent how a decision maker should react to development proposals.
2. The HBF is generally supportive of the Council looking to support opportunities for solar gain and thermal energy generation. However, the Council will need to ensure that these measures are balanced with other considerations such as site density, site layout, topography, heat resilience, site viability and deliverability. Building at a higher density can allow for more effective use of land to meet housing requirements, however, this can have the effect on reducing the potential for solar gain. This need for balance is set out in the NPPF² in relation to the efficient use of land and should be reflected within the policy wording.
3. The Councils will also need to consider the balance between solar gain and overheating and ensuring that the policy has sufficient flexibility to design for that balance.
4. The HBF does not consider that it is necessary for part VII to refer to the need to meet the requirements of Policy DM30c, it is assumed the Plan is to be read as a whole, and that unnecessary duplication should be avoided as set out in the NPPF³.
5. In relation to the green and blue infrastructure the HBF recognises the importance and opportunity that multi-functional green and blue infrastructure brings with regards to the benefits provided to people and nature, whilst at the same time helping to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change. However, the HBF considers that the Council may want to reconsider the amendment to the justification text in paragraph 9.5 which changes the levels of provision to an expectation, the HBF is concerned that this inflexibility may not be appropriate when the Council are looking to ensure effective use of land and to promote active travel. The HBF consider that this amendment is not necessary.
6. The HBF is also not clear what a development may need to provide in order to demonstrate that they have provided opportunities for food growing space or onsite composting, presumably the provision of a garden or outdoor space would offer these

² Paragraph 125 of NPPF 2021

³ Paragraph 16 of NPPF 2021

opportunities for any resident who wished to take them. However, this may not be possible or appropriate for all types of development for example apartment schemes where gardens are not private. The HBF recommends that this policy requirement is deleted, or 'where appropriate' added.

7. As with other policies the HBF considers that it would be beneficial for the Council to ensure that the policy is appropriately flexible and allows for consideration of viability implications to be considered in line with policy DM58.

3.2 Is the cross-referencing to other policies within Policy DM29 correctly drafted and necessary?

8. The HBF does not consider that it is necessary to repeat the content of other policies or to refer to development needing to be in line with their requirements. In particular, the HBF does not consider that it is necessary for part VII to refer to the need to meet the requirements of Policy DM30c, it is assumed the Plan is to be read as a whole, and that unnecessary duplication should be avoided as set out in the NPPF⁴.

3.3 How would opportunities being taken to maximise solar gain at new criterion II of Policy DM29 work with building at higher densities?

9. The HBF considers that the Council will need to incorporate further flexibility within the policy to ensure that consideration is given to other policy requirements including building at higher densities in relation to the need to maximise solar gain.

3.4 If the content of the supporting text at paragraph 9.5 is an expectation, should it form part of policy? Will the expectations set out in paragraph 9.5 affect the delivery of homes?

10. The HBF does not consider that the supporting text at paragraph 9.5 should be amended and does not consider that it should be included within the policy. The HBF is concerned that the levels of provision could have implications for the delivery of homes and considers that flexibility should be retained.

3.5 Is Policy DM30a justified, effective, and consistent with national policy?

11. The HBF does not consider that DM30a is justified or consistent with national policy.
12. This policy states that development should contribute to both mitigating and adapting to climate change to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It goes on to state that development proposals for all new residential development will be required to achieve a minimum 31% reduction in carbon emissions against Part L of the Building Regulations 2013, a minimum of a 75% reduction in carbon emissions against Part L by 01/01/2025 and net zero carbon emissions by 01/01/2028. It states that the carbon reductions must be met by using a fabric first approach and following the energy hierarchy.
13. The HBF recognises the need to move towards greater energy efficiency via a nationally consistent set of standards and timetable, which is universally understood and technically implementable.

⁴ Paragraph 16 of NPPF 2021

14. Part L (conservation of fuel and power) and Part F (ventilation) of the Building Regulations were updated in 2021 and took effect from 15th June 2022, with transitional arrangements in place for dwellings started before 15th June 2023. To ensure as many homes as possible are built in line with new energy efficiency standards, these transitional arrangements will apply to individual homes rather than an entire development.
15. The Government Response to The Future Homes Standard: 2019 Consultation on changes to Part L (conservation of fuel and power) and Part F (ventilation) of the Building Regulations for new dwellings dated January 2021 provides an implementation roadmap. The 2021 Building Regulations interim uplift will already deliver homes that are expected to produce 31% less CO₂ emissions compared to current standards. The implementation of the Future Homes Standard 2025 will ensure that new homes will produce at least 75% lower CO₂ emissions than one built to previous energy efficiency requirements. By delivering carbon reductions through the fabric and building services in a home rather than relying on wider carbon offsetting, the Future Homes Standard will ensure new homes have a smaller carbon footprint than any previous Government policy. In addition, this footprint will continue to reduce over time as the electricity grid decarbonises.
16. The HBF supports the Government's approach to the Future Homes Standard but there are difficulties and risks to housing delivery given the immaturity of the supply chain for the production / installation of heat pumps, the additional cost associated with this and the additional load that would be placed on local electricity networks in combination with Government proposals for the installation of EVCPs in new homes.
17. In autumn 2020, the HBF established a Future Homes Task Force to develop workable solutions for the delivery of the home building industry's contribution to meeting national environmental targets and objectives on Net Zero. Early collaborative work is focussed on tackling the challenges of implementing the 2021 and 2025 changes to Building Regulations successfully and as cost-effectively as possible, in particular providing information, advice and support for SME developers and putting the customer at the centre of thinking.
18. On 27 July 2021, the Future Homes Delivery Plan was published (see [The Future Homes Delivery Plan – Summary of the goals, the shared roadmap & the Future Homes Delivery Hub](#)). To drive and oversee the plan, the new delivery Hub was launched, with the support and involvement of Government. The Hub will help facilitate a sector-wide approach to identify the metrics, more detailed targets where necessary, methods and innovations to meet the goals and the collaborations required with supply chains and other sectors. It will incorporate the needs of all parties including the public and private sector and crucially, consumers, such that they can all play their part in delivering environmentally conscious homes that people want to live in.
19. The HBF considers that the Council should comply with the Government's intention of setting standards for energy efficiency through the Building Regulations. The key to

success is standardisation and avoidance of individual Council's specifying their own policy approach to energy efficiency, which undermines economies of scale for product manufacturers, suppliers and developers. The Councils should not need to set local energy efficiency standards to achieve the shared net zero goal because of the higher levels of energy efficiency standards for new homes proposed in the 2021 Part L uplift and the Future Homes Standard 2025.

20. The HBF considers that this policy should be deleted and left for building regulations, avoiding the same set of requirements being considered twice, and potentially reaching differing conclusions.
21. The policy also states that proposals must include opportunities for low carbon energy and renewable technologies or other sustainability measures to be integrated into the build. And goes on to state that the design of buildings must facilitate climate adaptation and mitigation measures as well as ensuring that the structure and fabric can be retrofitted through the lifetime of the building.
22. The HBF is concerned about how the costs associated with this element of the policy and how this has been considered in the Council's Viability Assessment.

3.6 Are the requirements to provide a Sustainable Design Statement and Energy Statement necessary?

23. The HBF does not consider that the requirements to provide a Sustainable Design Statement and Energy Statement are necessary.
24. The HBF considers that if the Council does decide to go ahead with this requirement it should ensure that the requirement is not overly onerous and is proportionate to the scale of the development.
25. The HBF would also query the need to consider the whole life cycle emissions. These emissions are related to the materials and products that go into making our buildings and infrastructure, and are likely to include emissions caused by: extraction, processing and manufacture; transport, assembly and installation on site; replacement, refurbishment and maintenance; demolition and disposal. Therefore, they are much wider than just the development industry and are not under the control of the applicant and may be difficult to detail, to influence and for the Council to monitor.

3.7 Is Policy DM30b justified and consistent with national policy?

26. The HBF does not consider that this policy, which seeks to introduce the optional water efficiency standards for new residential development is justified and consistent with national policy.
27. The Building Regulations require all new dwellings to achieve a mandatory level of water efficiency of 125 litres per day per person, which is a higher standard than that achieved by much of the existing housing stock. This mandatory standard represents an effective demand management measure. The Optional Technical Housing Standard is 110 litres per day per person.

28. As set out in the NPPF⁵, all policies should be underpinned by relevant and up to date evidence, which should be adequate, proportionate and focussed tightly on supporting and justifying the policies concerned. Therefore, a policy requirement for the optional water efficiency standard must be justified by credible and robust evidence. If the Council wishes to adopt the optional standard for water efficiency of 110 litres per person per day, then the Council should justify doing so by applying the criteria set out in the PPG. PPG⁶ states that where there is a *'clear local need, Local Planning Authorities (LPA) can set out Local Plan Policies requiring new dwellings to meet tighter Building Regulations optional requirement of 110 litres per person per day'*. PPG⁷ also states the *'it will be for a LPA to establish a clear need based on existing sources of evidence, consultations with the local water and sewerage company, the Environment Agency and catchment partnerships and consideration of the impact on viability and housing supply of such a requirement'*. The Housing Standards Review was explicit that reduced water consumption was solely applicable to water stressed areas. The North West and Lancaster are not considered to be an area of Water Stress as identified by the Environment Agency⁸. Therefore, the HBF considers that requirement for optional water efficiency standard is not justified nor consistent with national policy in relation to need or viability and should be deleted.
29. Part 4 of the policy states that new developments should maximise the inclusion of water efficiency and consumption measures. The HBF considers that the use of 'maximise' is inappropriate and unnecessary, and may add significant costs to a development.

3.8 Does the Council area meet the Planning Practice Guidance's (PPG) parameters for applying the optional requirement of 110 litres of water per person per day?

30. As set out above, the HBF does not consider that the Council area meets the PPG parameters for applying the optional requirement of 110 litres of water per person per day.

3.9 Is Policy DM30c justified and consistent with national policy?

31. This policy looks for all major development to demonstrate how they achieve sustainable and environmentally conscious development taking into account a number of principles. These include those in relation to the reuse and recycling of materials, the use of green / blue roofs and wall, the use of MMC, the production of a Sustainable Design Statement.
32. Part 3 of the policy states that the full lifecycle of the building from concept to demolition, alongside lifecycle emissions and environmental pollutants, must be considered. The HBF is concerned about how this element of the policy may be implemented and how it will be utilised by the decision maker. The HBF seeks assurances that it is something that can be considered by the developer on a case-by-case basis as a consideration that will be part of the wider considerations of the development and that it may not

⁵ Paragraph 31

⁶ ID: 56-014-20150327

⁷ ID: 56-015-20150327

⁸ 2021 Assessment of Water Stress Areas Update: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/water-stressed-areas-2021-classification>

appropriate to take forward all or any of the suggestions in paragraph 33. The HBF also queries the viability considerations that have been in relation to this policy requirement and seek assurance that it won't be something that leads to an additional adverse impact on development costs and viability.

33. The HBF is generally supportive of the use of modern methods of construction (MMC). The home building industry is a progressive industry that has, for many years, adopted a range of innovative methods to improve the sustainability, efficiency and reliability of materials and processes in the lifecycle of a construction. This ranges from the use of digitally enabled house type designs delivered through partnerships with offsite manufacturers and the wider supply chain, to the use of new building methods or assemblies. Due to the variety of methods encompassed under the broad umbrella term, MMC, there can be confusion as to the true extent of MMC taking place in the homebuilding industry. Research published by the National House-Building Council (NHBC) Foundation back in 2016 found that the majority of house builders and housing associations are using, or have considered, at least one MMC approach within their recent build programmes. However, it should be noted that the ability to scale up the delivery of MMC is determined by external factors as well as the appetite of home builders.
34. The Council will also need to consider how the promotion of MMC would sit alongside the Council's other policies particularly those in relation to design or housing mix. As the need to create variety of individually designed homes for each authority or area within an authority, along with the appropriate mix of homes to meet the local need is often at odds with the volumetric construction required by MMC which requires repetitive or standardised designs in order to be effective.
35. The HBF is generally supportive of the use of wording 'where possible' and 'where appropriate' in relation to the parts 4 and 5 of the policy, which is considered to add a level of flexibility. The HBF considers that it would be appropriate for the Council to acknowledge within the justification text that this flexibility applies not just to physical site constraints or site designs but also to the viability of the development.
36. As has been set out previously, the HBF considers that requirements for a Sustainable Design Statement are unnecessary, however, if the Council does decide to go ahead with this requirement it should ensure that the requirement is not overly onerous and is proportionate to the scale of the development.

3.10 Is Policy DM53 justified, effective and consistent with national policy?

37. The HBF does not consider that Policy DM53 is justified or consistent with national policy.
38. The policy states that where feasible, new major development should connect to existing district heating or cooling networks or provide new networks. The HBF considers that it is important that this is not seen as requirement and is instead implemented on a flexible basis. Heat networks are one aspect of the path towards decarbonising heat, however currently the predominant technology for district-sized communal heating networks is

gas combined heat and power (CHP) plants. Over 90% of district networks are gas fired. As 2050 approaches, meeting the Government's climate target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions to net zero will require a transition from gas-fired networks to renewable or low carbon alternatives such as large heat pumps, hydrogen or waste-heat recovery but at the moment one of the major reasons why heat network projects do not install such technologies is because of the up-front capital cost. The Council should be aware that for the foreseeable future it will remain uneconomic for most heat networks to install low-carbon technologies. This may mean that it is more sustainable and more appropriate for developments to utilise other forms of energy provision, and this may need to be considered.

39. Furthermore, some heat network consumers do not have comparable levels of satisfaction as consumers on gas and electricity networks, and they pay a higher price. Currently, there are no sector specific protections for heat network consumers, unlike for people on other utilities such as gas, electricity or water. A consumer living in a building serviced by a heat network does not have the same opportunities to switch supplier as they would for most gas and electricity supplies. All heat network domestic consumers should have ready access to information about their heat network, a good quality of service, fair and transparently priced heating and a redress option should things go wrong. Research by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) found that a significant proportion of suppliers and managing agents do not provide pre-transaction documents, or what is provided contains limited information, particularly on the on-going costs of heat networks and poor transparency regarding heating bills, including their calculation, limits consumers' ability to challenge their heat suppliers reinforcing a perception that prices are unjustified. The monopolistic nature of heat networks means that future price regulation is required to protect domestic consumers. The CMA have concluded that "a statutory framework should be set up that underpins the regulation of all heat networks." They recommended that "the regulatory framework should be designed to ensure that all heat network customers are adequately protected. At a minimum, they should be given a comparable level of protection to gas and electricity in the regulated energy sector." The Government's latest consultation on heating networks proposes a regulatory framework that would give Ofgem oversight and enforcement powers across quality of service, provision of information and pricing arrangements for all domestic heat network consumers.

3.11 Is Policy DM53 consistent with the Arnsdale & Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Development Plan Document?

3.12 Should Policy DM53 refer to impact on nationally designated landscapes instead of or as well as referring to the impact on the setting of nationally designated landscapes?

3.13 What is Figure 13.1? Does it represent opportunities or constraints for wind energy? Are these opportunities and constraints adequately replicated on the Policies Map?

Matter 4: Transport

Issue: *Whether the policies relating to transport are positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy*

4.1 Is Policy T2 as drafted sufficiently flexible to allow for different circumstances?

4.2 What would secure cycle parking mean in Policies T2 and T4?

1. The Council refer to guidance within section 11.6 of LTN 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design, as part of the justification text to Policy T4. However, it would probably be beneficial for the Council to provide more details as to what they would be seeking in terms of secure cycle parking in the justification text. This text should also acknowledge that different types of secure parking may be required in different circumstances and locations, for example CCTV should not be required in areas with development overlooking or where cycle parking is likely to be short stay.

4.3 Is Policy T4 positively prepared and consistent with national policy?

2. The HBF does not consider that Policy T4 is consistent with national policy.
3. The Council has amended this policy to state that development that generates significant traffic movements (this is likely to include strategic housing allocations and potentially other residential developments) should be supported by frequent high quality public transport linking them to Lancaster City Centre or other key destinations, such as the main urban centres and employment areas. It goes on to state that where there are deficiencies in existing services developers will be required to fund the provision of new services or enhance existing services.
4. The policy does not set out how deficiencies in the existing services will be identified or how frequent high-quality services will be defined, in order for this to be an effective policy more detail will be required.
5. The Council will also need to consider the balance between reducing carbon emissions, active travel, low-carbon private vehicles, working from home, access to existing or new services and the use of public transport. It may be that going forward providing additional public transport is not always the most sustainable option, or is only part of the most sustainable option, and this may also need to be considered as part of the determination of a planning application on a case-by-case basis.
6. The HBF would also note that it is not always possible to provide new or enhanced services, as this requires public transport operators to be able to provide these additional services, which may not always be the case, making the policy unimplementable, and not effective. This may particularly be an issue in rural areas or for smaller sites, or where the costs to support the service would be significant.
7. The HBF also notes that there may be significant costs that are associated with this requirement that will need to be considered in relation to the viability of development.

4.4 Are the requirements of Policy T4 in respect of provision of new services and enhancement of existing services deliverable?

8. As set out above, the HBF is concerned that the provision of new services and enhancement of existing services may not always be deliverable and is often out of the control of the homebuilding industry. It may also be that there are significant costs associated with the provision, which may also not be viable or appropriate in terms of the relation to the scale of the site being developed.

4.5 How will any deficiencies in existing public transport services be identified for the purposes of Policy T4?

9. The HBF does not consider that it is clear how any deficiencies in the existing public transport services will be identified. As this will potentially be an additional cost on a developer it is important that this can be considered early on, in the consideration of a sites purchase and delivery.

4.6 How is a frequent high-quality public transport service defined in Policy T4?

10. The HBF does not consider that Policy T4 defines what is considered to be a frequent high-quality public transport service. Although any definition may need to consider a level of flexibility, to ensure that it is appropriate taking into account location and time of day.

4.7 What is the difference between a 'Bus Rapid Transit System' and a 'Better Buses Scheme' in Policy T4 and elsewhere in the Plans?

4.8 Is the definition of a 400m walking distance soundly based in Policy T4?

11. Paragraph 14 defines a reasonable walking distance as 400m. There is no evidence as to why 400m or 5 minutes is considered to be a reasonable walking distance. The HBF would suggest that the Council may want to consider some flexibility to this 400m distance. The HBF considers that many other factors, including those such as the local environment, footpath quality, perception of personal safety, topography and quality of the public transport service, are likely to play in to the distance that people will consider reasonable.

4.9 Should reference be made in Policies SP10, T2 and T4 to the need for the realignment of Junction 33 of the M6?

4.10 Is Policy SP10 effective and justified?

4.11 Is Policy SG12 effective and justified?

4.12 Are the policies and supporting text of the Plans consistent in how accessibility is referred to?

4.13 Does Policy DM31's supporting text represent a reasonable approach to addressing air pollution? Should references to the Environment Bill in the supporting text to Policy DM31 refer to the Act?

4.14 How will the Council ensure that development proposals are located where sustainable travel patterns can be achieved as per Policy DM60? Are the proposed changes to criterion II of Policy DM60 necessary given that criterion III of Policy DM60 refers to buildings and places being easily accessible?

4.15 Which paragraph of the Framework should criterion VIII of Policy DM60 be referring to?

4.16 Should the final paragraph of the Walking section of Policy DM61 refer to the additional criterion IV on accessibility?

4.17 What status does Local Transport Note 1/20 have? Will there be flexibility in applying this document?

4.18 With reference to Policy DM61, what does equitable implementation of cycling improvements look like? Furthermore, what is an aspirational route?

4.19 Should the staff numbers for provision of shower facilities be included in Policy DM61 rather than in the supporting text?

4.20 Is Policy DM62 positively prepared, justified, effective, and consistent with national policy?

12. The HBF does not consider that Policy DM62 is justified or consistent with national policy. The HBF considers that the policy unnecessarily duplicates building regulations, and as such is likely to cause confusion when both processes are trying to assess delivery of the same infrastructure.

4.21 Does Policy DM62's coverage of electric vehicle charging overlap with Part S of Building Regulations?

13. The HBF considers that Policy DM62's coverage of electric vehicle charging overlaps with Part S of the Building Regulations.

14. The HBF is supportive of encouragement for the use of electric and hybrid vehicles via a national standardised approach implemented through the Building Regulations to ensure a consistent approach to future proofing the housing stock. Part S of the Building Regulations 'Infrastructure for the charging of electric vehicles' has now been published and took effect from 15th June 2022. This document provides guidance on the installation and location of electric vehicle charge points (EVCPs). It states that a new residential building with associated parking must have access to EVCPs. It states that the total number of EVCPs must be equal to the number of parking spaces if there are fewer parking spaces than dwellings, or the equal to the number of dwellings where there are more parking spaces. The Regulations also set technical requirements for the charging points these include having a nominal output of 7kW and being fitted with a universal socket. The Government has estimated installation of such charging points add on an additional cost of approximately £976.

15. The Regulations do, however, include a cost cap of £3,600 for the average cost of installation and allow for other exceptions. The costs of installing the cables and the charge point hardware will vary considerably based on site-specific conditions in relation to the local grid. The introduction of EVCPs in new buildings will impact on the electricity demand from these buildings especially for multi-dwelling buildings. A requirement for large numbers of EVCPs will require a larger connection to the development and will introduce a power supply requirement, which may otherwise not be needed. The level of upgrade needed is dependent on the capacity available in the local network resulting in additional costs in relation to charge point instalment. The Government recognises that the cost of installing charge points will be higher in areas where significant electrical capacity reinforcements are needed. In certain cases, the need to install charge points could necessitate significant grid upgrades, which will be costly for the developer. Some costs would also fall on the distribution network operator.
16. In conclusion, it is not necessary for the Council to specify provision of EVCPs because of the Government's changes to Building Regulations.

4.22 Is there sufficient grid capacity to support electric vehicle charging requirements and has account been taken of the need to upgrade or reinforce electrical supply infrastructure?

17. The HBF considers that this is a question for the Council. However, if this policy was deleted these issues would already be covered in the Building Regulations consideration of the provision of EV Charging Points and infrastructure in terms of the cost cap mentioned above.

4.23 Is there sufficient certainty about which applications the electric vehicle requirements in Policy DM62 would be applied to?

4.24 Does Policy DM62 conflict with the energy hierarchy in Policy DM30a in respect of the use of renewable or low carbon energy generated on-site?

The HBF considers that it is not necessary for this policy to state that electricity provision should be provided through renewable and / or low carbon energy generated on site. The energy hierarchy is clear that priority should be given to energy conservation and energy efficiency before renewables, and renewables before low carbon. The HBF is also not clear why on-site provision would be preferable over other sources of renewable or low carbon energy, where scale may be a factor in their efficiency.

4.25 Are the requirements for covered and secure cycle parking in Appendix E of the Part 2 Plan reasonable?

4.26 Is Policy DM64 effective?

Matter 6: Water Management

Issue: Are the policies on water management justified, effective and consistent with national policy?

6.1 Is Policy DM33 justified, effective and consistent with national policy?

1. The HBF does not consider that Policy DM33 is justified, effective or consistent with national policy.
2. Paragraph 1 of the policy states that proposals will be required to minimise the risk of flooding to people and property by taking a sequential approach which directs development, including access/egress, play / recreation areas and gardens to the areas at the lowest risk of flooding.
3. The HBF considers that in relation to play/recreation areas this is contrary to guidance set out in the PPG⁹ which provides the flood risk vulnerability classifications, and identifies amenity open space, nature conservation biodiversity and outdoor sports and recreation as being water-compatible development. As such, the HBF recommends that this element of the policy wording is removed.
4. Paragraph 2 of this policy states that new development will need to satisfy the requirements of the sequential test and exception test where necessary in accordance with the requirements of national planning policy and any other relevant guidance including the Council's Flood Risk SPD.
5. The HBF does not consider that it is appropriate for the Plan to require new developments to be in accordance with the Council's Flood Risk SPD. This SPD is not being tested as part of the preparation of the Plan, and therefore its contents should not be required to be conformed with. The HBF considers that this part of the policy should be amended to remove the requirement to accord with the SPD, and instead identify it as a consideration in the determination of applications.
6. Part VI of this policy states that proposals will be required to reduce the existing causes and impacts of flooding by reducing surface water run-off and / or increasing the capacity of flood storage areas. It also states that opportunities must be taken to improve the function of watercourses and the opportunities must be taken to introduce the natural flood management techniques on and off the site to reduce flooding.
7. Whilst the HBF concur that seeking to reduce flood risk is laudable, this could be at considerable cost for any developments in these areas. This could potentially have a significant impact on the delivery of homes and will the HBF consider that the costs associated with this policy will need to be carefully considered as part of the viability of any development.

⁹ PPG ID: 7-066-20140306

6.2 Has sufficient regard been given to the PPG's advice in terms of flood risk vulnerability?

18. The HBF does not consider the appropriate regard has been given to the PPG's advice in terms of flood risk vulnerability and the classifications that the PPG identifies in Table 2¹⁰. Table 2 identifies amenity open space, nature conservation and biodiversity, outdoor sports and recreation and essential facilities such as changing rooms as water compatible development. Table 3¹¹ suggests that water compatible uses are appropriate in Zones 1, 2 and 3.

6.3 Are criteria III f. and g. of Policy DM33 sufficiently clear in respect of other sources of flooding?

6.4 Are the requirements of Policy DM34 justified, effective, and consistent with national policy? Is Policy DM34 sufficiently flexible?

8. The HBF does not consider that Policy DM34 is justified, effective or consistent with national policy, and do not consider that it is sufficiently flexible.

9. This policy requires all new development to use Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) giving priority to naturalistic solutions incorporate into the soft landscaping of the development. It goes on to set out the drainage hierarchy and to lists the elements that the SuDS must incorporate, it states that on greenfield sites the peak run-off rate and volume must not exceed the existing greenfield rates.

10. The NPPF¹² already looks for major developments to incorporate sustainable drainage systems unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate. The HBF agrees that wherever practicable, it is important to incorporate SuDS within planned major development schemes in line with the NPPF. SuDS can improve the quality of life in a development by making them more visually attractive, sustainable and more resilient to change, by improving urban air quality, regulating building temperatures, reducing noise and delivering recreation and educational opportunities. However, it will be important for the Council to be flexible in relation to how SuDS are provided as devising an appropriate layout is going to require a very careful balancing exercise of many competing factors, particularly in relation to other planning policy requirements, the efficient use of land and the individual site circumstances.

11. There may also be examples where an above ground solution is not feasible and other alternatives from within the hierarchy are considered. This flexibility is a fundamental aspect of the Sustainable Drainage Hierarchy. This flexibility will also need consideration in relation to the requirements for all SuDS to incorporate landscape and amenity enhancement and environmental and biodiversity benefits, which may not be possible in relation to underground attenuation.

6.5 Is Policy DM36 consistent with national policy?

¹⁰ PPG ID: 7-066-20140306

¹¹ ID: 7-067-20140306

¹² Paragraph 169

6.6 Should Policy DM36 make specific reference to how development within defined Groundwater Source Protection Zones would be assessed?

6.7 Has sufficient consideration been given to developments on public water supply catchment land?

Matter 7: Green and Blue Infrastructure

Issue: Are the policies on green and blue infrastructure justified, effective and consistent with national policy?

7.1 Is Policy SC4 justified and effective? Would Policy SC4 prevent renewable energy projects from occurring within green and blue infrastructure areas?

7.2 Is the coverage of green and blue infrastructure on the Policies Map and within Figure 23.2 of the Part 1 Plan appropriate?

7.3 Is it clear what the existing green and blue infrastructure network is?

7.4 Policy SC5 refers to opportunity areas to be in accordance with Policy DM43. Are the two policies consistent?

7.5 Is Policy SP8 justified and consistent with national policy?

7.6 Should reference be made in Policy SP8 to the Environment Act 2021?

7.7 Has sufficient consideration been given in Policy SP8 to site constraints, such as utilities infrastructure?

7.8 With reference to new criterion III of Policy DM27, will it be clear to developers what form an assessment of the environmental, climate mitigation and climate adaptation value of an open space will take?

7.9 What is the evidential basis for the change in dwelling thresholds for on and off-site provision of open space and financial contributions in Appendix D of the Part 2 Plan?

40. The HBF is not aware of the evidential basis for the change in the dwelling thresholds for on and off-site provision of open space and financial contributions in Appendix D. Therefore, the HBF are not able to determine if these changes are appropriate. It is also not clear whether the viability implications of this change have been considered.

7.10 Is it necessary to cross-reference between Policies DM27 and DM43?

7.11 Is Policy DM43 effective and consistent with national policy?

7.12 Will all development proposals be expected to integrate green and blue infrastructure and forge linkages with the wider network?

7.13 Does Policy DM43 provide sufficient certainty that green and blue infrastructure will be provided and retained?

7.14 Does Policy DM43 exclude any possible value that green and blue infrastructure networks can have?

7.15 Is Policy DM45 positively prepared, justified, and consistent with national policy?

Matter 8: Viability and First Homes

Issue: Do the Plans take a justified and effective approach to the viability and deliverability of sites and policies?

8.1 Is the Council's approach to viability consistent with national policy, the PPG, and RICS guidance?

8.2 Does the Council's viability work adequately reflect local circumstances? Were appraisal inputs appropriate?

8.3 Has there been meaningful engagement with stakeholders on viability assumptions?

8.4 Taking account of the Council's viability work, would the requirements of the Plans' policies put the viability of the implementation of the Plans at serious risk? Have all of the Plans' policy requirements, including requirements of Policies CC1, T2, T4, SC4, SP8, DM29, DM30a, DM30b, DM30c, DM33, DM34, DM45, DM59, and DM62 been factored in?

1. Paragraph 3.4 of the Viability Assessment suggests that Policies DM1, DM2, DM3, DM30a, DM44 and DM62 have been considered as having implications for viability testing, they have also included a standard S106 provision of £4,400. As the HBF has highlighted throughout their consultation responses there are a significant number of policy areas that have potential implications for the viability of development, these include the requirements in Policy in T4 to fund new or enhanced public transport services, the design principles in Policy DM29, sustainability principles in DM30a, the water efficiency requirements in Policy DM30b, the need to reduce flood risk in Policy DM30c and above ground SuDS in Policy DM34. As no breakdown of the basis for the S106 contributions has been provided within the Viability Assessment it is not possible to determine which costs may have been considered and which have not.
2. It is also noted that there are concerns raised by a number of HBF members through the Cushman and Wakefield response to the Viability Assessment, that even where the policy requirements have been considered the costs associated with the requirements are not always appropriate.

8.5 Has development other than housing development been assessed as part of the viability assessment work?

8.6 Is there scope for any requirements to be relaxed in instances where development would not be viable? Is the appropriate mechanism for this within Policy DM58 or should it be included in other policies throughout the Plans?

3. The HBF considers that the policies of the Plan should incorporate a level of flexibility, and that the Council should acknowledge viability may be an issue for consideration in the determination of an application and may result in the relaxation of some policy requirements, the process for which is then set out in Policy DM58.

8.7 Was consideration given in the Council's viability work to the phasing of strategic sites and any consequential effects on viability?

8.8 Should there be any transitional arrangements for the introduction of additional policy requirements for viability reasons?

4. The HBF considers that the use of transitional arrangements could be beneficial in terms of viability, as it will give developers chance to incorporate these additional costs into the development plans for a site.

Issue: Is the approach to First Homes consistent with national policy?

8.9 Is Policy DM3 justified or consistent with national policy and the PPG's advice?

2. The Council are seeking to amend this policy to refer to affordable homes for sale rather than intermediate tenure, in relation to affordable housing tenure mix.
3. The NPPF¹³ states that where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed, planning policies and decisions should expect at least 10% of the total number of homes to be available for affordable home ownership. The Council will need to consider how this will work with their proposed split in the Morecambe, Heysham and Overton areas where the affordable housing target is 15% and the proposed tenure split would see only 40-50% of these as affordable homes for sale. If the Council does not intend to meet the 10% affordable home ownership requirement, then this will need to be evidenced.
4. The PPG states that First Homes are the Government's preferred discounted market tenure and should account for at least 25% of all affordable housing units delivered by developers through planning obligations. This should be covered by the 40-50% affordable homes for sale tenure split.

8.10 Are Policy DM3 and the supporting text consistent in how First Homes are dealt with?

5. Policy DM3 does not specifically mention First Homes, it does however include affordable homes for sale. The approach to affordable homes for sale and the justification text are not entirely consistent, as the policy sets two alternate policy splits as a guide whilst the justification text suggests that the tenure split can be between the two. This is a small inconsistency but could be easily clarified in the Policy text to suggest a split between 50-60% affordable / social rent and between 40% and 50% affordable homes for sale. Assuming as above that the Council can provide evidence in relation to why they are not seeking to meet the 10% affordable home ownership requirement across the area.
6. It is also noted that whilst the policy suggests affordable homes for sale as part of the split the justification text does not refer to affordable homes for sale in line with the definition in the NPPF glossary, it instead states that these affordable homes for sale should be delivered to ensure the 25% First Homes and the remainder should be shared

¹³ Paragraph 65

ownership. The HBF considers that this limited definition of affordable home ownership is not appropriate as it is not in line with the NPPF or the policy, and does not allow for sufficient flexibility.