

SA1/2 Thornton – Lambs Road/Raikes Road – "Is the requirement for the new school justified"

Lancashire County Council (LCC) feels that, in principal, the wording proposed by Emery Planning could be accepted as a reasonable proposition, with some qualification.

I.e. "The development should make appropriate contributions towards education provision via financial contributions for improvements to existing schools OR land to be made available for a new primary school as part of the financial contributions."

Firstly, in terms of wording, we would suggest that 'improvements to' be replaced with 'expansion of'.

Secondly, we are concerned that LCC haven't had a reasonable time to investigate fully prior to the examination. To clarify, whilst this opportunity was first identified to Wyre Borough Council on the 4th October 2017 LCC School Planning Team were first made aware of the proposal that additional land could be provided that would enable Stanah Primary School to be expanded on the 17th April 2018. At this point, the representative (Emery Planning) indicated that the land in question at Stanah Primary School was owned by LCC. However further investigation, including Emery Planning's own documentation demonstrated that the land was in fact owned by Wyre Borough Council. Consequently, on 24th April the School Planning Team contacted Wyre Borough Council to enquire whether this land option should be considered further. At that time, LCC suggested to Wyre Borough Council that a joint response to the Emery Planning proposal may be beneficial. No response has been received at this time.

We recognise that the provision of a new school in relation to Lambs Road/Raikes Road: Land on the East Side of Lambs Road - 17/00951/OUTMAJ (66 dwellings) and Land off Lambs Road - 14/00553/OULMAJ (165 dwellings) and 17/00050/REMAJ (157 dwellings) could be challenged in terms of the tests of CIL (scale and kind) however, in agreement with Wyre Borough Council, our discussions with Wyre took a strategic approach and were based on the Thornton Cleveleys Planning area rather than individual piecemeal developments.

To clarify, whilst the proposition made by Emery Planning is reasonable to LCC, the potential for expansion of existing schools without the additional land for Stanah Primary School is considered to be less than the potential need generated by the proposed level of development for the Thornton Strategic area.

In specific reference to the option for the expansion of Stanah Primary School, the restrictions of Section 77 mean that there is limited scope for providing additional places at this school without securing additional land, as per reference above.

In addition, there are other limitations to providing additional places within existing schools, as outlined within the authority's School Place Provision Strategy. These include:

- Pupil attainment levels
- Parental preference
- Current Size of school
- Location to the school in relation to population
- Practicalities and cost of expansion
- Willingness of the Governing Body and/ or Diocese to expand

Any significant enlargement would also require the authority to conduct Statutory Consultation before making any decision to expand.

In summary, whilst LCC considers that Emery Planning proposition is reasonable, it depends upon the ability to secure the additional land for Stanah Primary School and we feel that the Key Development Consideration (KDC) No.6 should reflect this.

However, if at a later stage, any secured site is deemed unnecessary for the provision of school places to serve a development, this position would be conveyed to the developer and the site would not be transferred.