

Appendix B

Explanation Surrounding Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment

Sustainability Appraisal Background

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is an integral component of the plan making process, performing a key role in providing a sound evidence base for the plan. The purpose of the SA process is to evaluate the social, environmental and economic implications of the plan from the outset and to ensure that this informs the decision making process. The SA should ultimately help to demonstrate that the final plan is the most appropriate given the range of reasonable alternatives.

SA is a mandatory part of the production of Development Plan Documents (DPDs) under Section 19 (5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The requirements of how SA should be carried out are set out in guidance – Planning Policy Statement 12, the Plan-Making Manual and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (SEA) Directive 2001/42/EC.

In most cases Supplementary Planning Documents will not require an SA unless the document raises significant environmental effects which have not been adequately appraised in a higher level DPD.

Habitats Regulations Assessment Background

In accordance with The Conservation of Natural Habitats and c.) (Amendment) Regulations 2007, and European Communities (1992) Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna (the Habitats Directive), the City Council is required to undertake a screening exercise of the likely significant effects of the plan (the SPD) on sites of international nature conservation importance. The plan can only be permitted where it has been satisfied that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of international nature conservation sites.

Preston Local Development Framework

The Central Lancashire Publication Core Strategy and the Sites for Preston Issues and Options Discussion Paper (i.e. the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD) both identify and allocate the New CBD as being one of the main locations for new regionally and sub-regionally significant office development.

In accordance with statutory requirements, both these LDF documents have been subject to SA. The Core Strategy is at an advanced stage of production, and as such a Final SA Report has been published. Whilst the Site Allocations DPD is at an early stage of development, the New CBD site has undergone an initial SA filtering exercise, and has met the requirements to be considered further.

The role of the New CBD SPD is to provide clearer and more detailed guidance and principals for the future of the New CBD site. The does not allocate the New CBD for development; this is being achieved through the Core Strategy and Site Allocations DPDs – the ‘parent’ documents to this SPD.

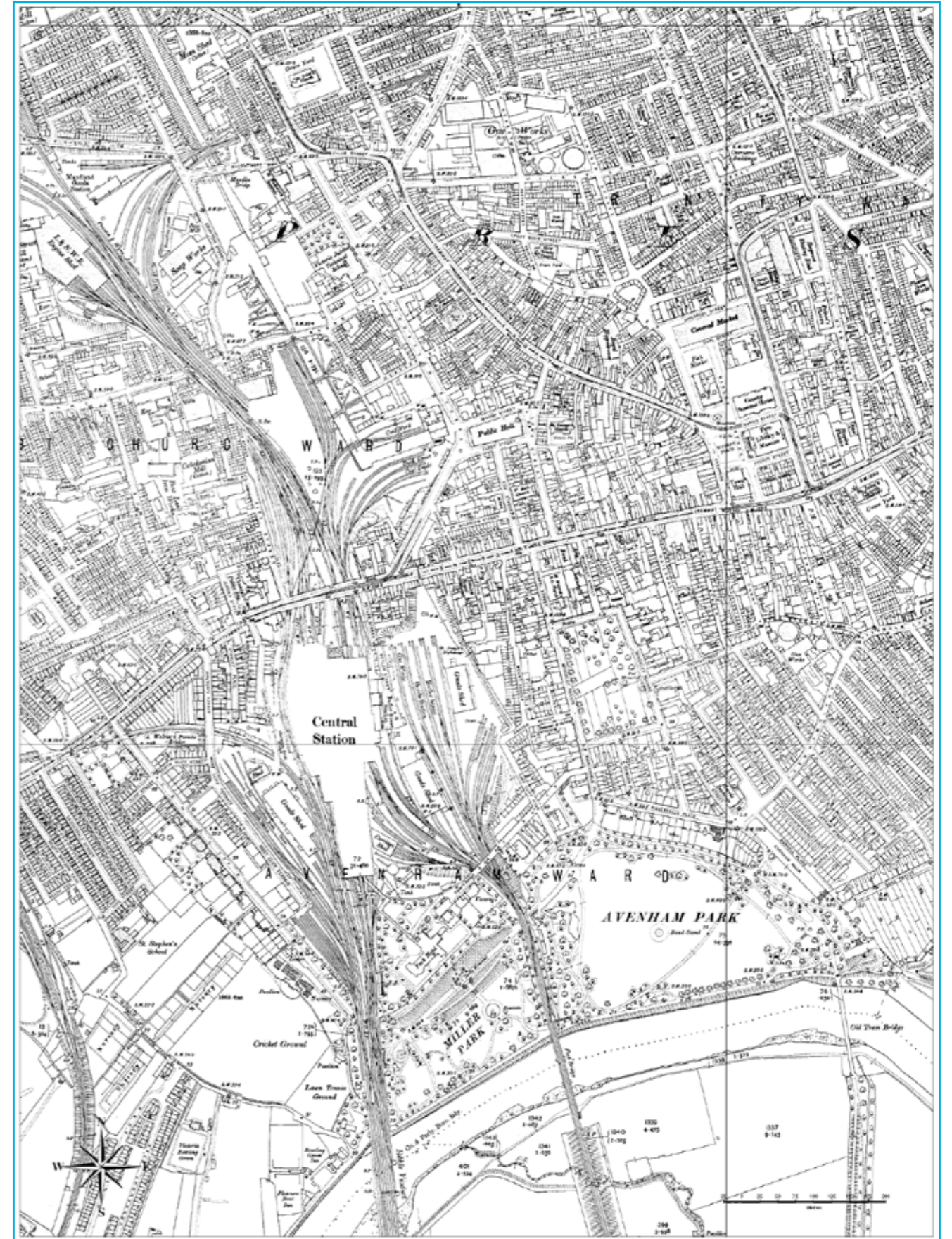
Given the status the New CBD site has achieved through the Core Strategy and Site Allocations DPD, and the level of SA these documents have undergone, combined with recent Government guidance removing the specific need for SA of SPDs, it is proposed that an independent SA of this SPD is not required. It is considered that the SA work already undertaken on the ‘parent’ documents to this SPD satisfy statutory requirements, and that an independent SA of this SPD would not successfully further this work and can therefore not be justified.

The Core Strategy has also been subject to screening in respect of Habitats Regulations, in conformity with the requirements set out above. The Core Strategy is the parent document to this SPD, specifically Policy 1 (Locating Growth) and Policy 9 (Economic Growth and Employment). Given the SPD is entirely in conformity with the Core Strategy and does not include any new policies or site allocations, it is considered that a full Habitats screening assessment of the SPD is not required.

The Central Lancashire Core Strategy Habitats Regulations Screening Assessment Report (March 2011) concludes that the Core Strategy will not result in any likely significant effects for any sites of international nature conservation importance. Where any potential impacts have been identified, these have been mitigated through implementation of other policies in the Core Strategy.

Appendix C

1911 Ordnance Survey Map of Central Preston



Appendix D

Policies D5 and D6 of the Preston Local Plan

Tall Buildings

15.32 Preston's elevated position on the Ribble Valley escarpment and the location of a number of tall buildings in and around the City centre combine to create a distinctive skyline. Hence, Preston is very prominent in the wider landscape, when viewed from the M6 or M61 driving north, or from a number of vantage points to the south of the river (for example, from the Penwortham By-Pass, or the Bamber Bridge By-Pass). The Council will strive to protect this skyline, and ensure that any new tall buildings are located so that it is enhanced and not adversely affected.

15.33 The Council is particularly anxious to avoid high-rise developments which result in an over-bearing environment at street level. Developments should always include a low-rise, element at human scale on the street frontage. This will avoid the 'canyon' effect that can occur when high-rise buildings are built right up to the pavement; this can result in a loss of sunlight and adverse wind conditions.

15.34 Tall buildings must make a positive contribution to Preston's skyline, so it is considered that even within the general area identified; only a few new tall buildings can be accommodated satisfactorily.

Policy D5	Tall Buildings
	Development which includes a tall building will be permitted provided that:
(a)	it is in a location that enhances the Preston skyline;
(b)	it does not inhibit the view of, or adversely affect the setting of, important landmark buildings;
(c)	it is designed to provide an environment at street level which is of human scale and not overbearing (see policy D7); and,
(d)	it does not result in a proliferation of tall buildings in any one locality.
An area to the north and west of the City centre bounded by Corporation Street, Moor Lane, North Street, Walker Street, and Ringway has been identified as a location in which the above criteria may be satisfied. 'See Plan 6 (following)'	

15.35 It is difficult to define the height of a "tall building" in precise terms. However, for the purposes of this policy, a tall building will be considered to be of six or more storeys (or the equivalent, should the building feature a tower or spire). Developers will be required to demonstrate that the criteria have been satisfied by their proposals.

Vistas

15.36 Preston's City centre presents an exciting skyline when viewed from a distance, particularly when approaching the City centre from the south-west (Penwortham) or the south-east (Walton-Le-Dale). This policy, in conjunction with the previous policy on Tall Buildings, seeks to preserve these views. It also seeks to protect views out of the City centre, particularly of St. Walburge's Church.

15.37 Within the City centre, Preston's historic street pattern has created a variety of attractive vistas which often culminate in a distinguished 'landmark' building.

The most important views and vistas are identified on Plan 6 and are as follows:

1. Along Friargate towards the Harris Museum;
2. Along Friargate towards St. Walburge's Church;
3. Along Market Street towards Lowthian House;
4. Up and down Harris Street;
5. Along Fishergate towards the Parish Church;
6. Along Fishergate towards the Fishergate Baptist Church;
7. Along Lancaster Road in both directions;
8. Along Corporation Street towards St. Walburge's Church;
9. From Avenham and Miller parks towards Avenham/East Cliff;
10. Along Avenham Walk towards the Harris Institute.

15.38 Wherever possible, new developments will be encouraged which create or enhance vistas.

Policy D6	Vistas
	New development must not have an adverse effect on:
(a)	established long distance views into the City centre, particularly from the south; and, important local vistas which focus on landmark buildings; all as indicated on Plan 6.