Hearing Statement

Lancaster University

Response to Matter 3: Sustainable Design, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

CBRE Limited
On Behalf of Lancaster University

August 2022

Contents

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Hearing Statement has been produced by CBRE Limited, on behalf of Lancaster University, in relation to Matter 3 of the Inspector's Matters, Issues and Questions.

1.2 CBRE Limited, on behalf of Lancaster University, has previously submitted representations in relation to Lancaster City Council's (LCC) Climate Emergency Local Plan Review (CELPR) 2020-2031. CBRE Limited (hereafter referred to as 'CBRE') acts on behalf of Lancaster University in relation to its wider estate in Lancaster.

1.3 Representations have been made to the following stages of the CELPR to date:

- Scoping Consultation (November 2020);
- Regulation 18, Draft version (letter dated 17th September 2021); and
- Regulation 19, Publication version (letter dated 14th March 2022 and completed Regulation 19 Response Forms).

1.4 The representations made to date have supported many aspects of the proposed amendments to the adopted Strategic Policies & Land Allocation Development Plan Document (DPD) (examination document ref. SD_01.1) and the Development Management DPD (examination document ref. SD_02.1). There is significant alignment between the Council's CELPR and the University's own climate emergency declaration.

1.5 Lancaster University shares the view of the Council that there is simply no greater global challenge than addressing the climate emergency and that the duty to address this challenge is a collective one. The University declared a climate emergency on 23rd November 2020 and is committed to reaching net zero for carbon emissions from electricity and heating by 2030 and net zero from all other emissions by 2035. The University has already implemented a range of projects which have directly reduced the University's carbon footprint and driven significant behavioural changes amongst students and staff.

1.6 Lancaster University is the highest producer of renewable energy of all UK Universities and has already reduced its heating and electricity emissions by 50% since 2005.

1.7 The University has an existing wind turbine, located on land within its ownership to the east of the M6, in an area referred to as 'Forrest Hills'. The turbine was approved on the 11th August 2011 (permission reference 10/01061/FUL).

1.8 The turbine is operational and generates between 4,000,000 and 5,000,000 kWh (kilowatt hours) of electricity, catering for around 14% of the University's annual electricity consumption. The turbine has produced enough electricity to power over 1,200 homes for a year.

1.9 The turbine has successfully reduced the University's carbon emissions by 1,000-2,200 tCO2e[1] each year since its installation in 2012.

[1] 'tCO2e' refers to tonnes (t) of carbon dioxide (CO_2) equivalent (e)

1.10 Given the success of the University's first wind turbine, the University is considering the potential for a second wind turbine to be delivered. This is stated in the University's Carbon Management Plan 2015-2020.

1.11 Lancaster University is committed to the sustainable operation and growth of its campus and recognises its role in addressing the climate emergency. In order to achieve its ambitious targets it is essential that the Local Plan and planning policy framework underpin and support the delivery of these key University objectives.

1.12 The remainder of this Hearing Statement refers specifically to Policy DM53, *Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Generation,* specifically the inconsistency between Figure 13.1 of the CELPR (Development Management DPD, examination document ref. SD_02.1) and the amended Strategic Policies and Land Allocations Policies Map (District) (examination document ref. P_01.1.1) regarding the suitability of the University's estate for wind energy.

1.13 This Hearing Statement responds to the following Issues and Questions as raised by the Inspector:

- Matter 3, Question 3.10: *Is Policy DM53 justified, effective and consistent with national policy?*
- Matter 3, Question 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?*

2.0 Matter 3, Issue 1, Question 3.10

2.1 This section relates to Matter 3, Issue 1, Question 3.10 *Is Policy DM53 justified, effective and consistent with national policy?*

2.1 Is Policy DM53 justified?

2.2 Policy DM53 of the CELPR Development Management DPD is not justified as there is a lack of evidence to explain why the Policies Map (ref. P_01.1.1) does not align with Figure 13.1 of document ref. SD_02.1, in that the Policies Map shows a more limited extent of areas that are suitable for wind energy, compared with Figure 13.1.

2.3 We do not consider that Policy DM53 is justified as it restricts areas suitable for wind energy and in fact removes some areas that were previously identified as being suitable for wind energy in the adopted version of the Local Plan (2020).

2.4 We consider that this conflicts with the purpose of the CELPR as set out in the Foreword to the CELPR Strategic Policies & Land Allocation DPD (examination document ref. SD_01.1), which states that the aim of the CELPR is to: '*...review the Local Plan to seek better environmental outcomes for the District as a whole, ultimately assisting with the delivery of the net zero carbon ambition of the council*' (page 2).

2.5 Furthermore, supporting policy text relating to Policy DM53 at paragraph 13.2 (examination document ref. SD_02.1) states that '*The use of on-site renewable energies and low carbon technologies can also provide the opportunities for large electricity users to secure green methods of power locally*'. The University is a significant electricity user with emissions associated with electricity and gas consumption comprising 16% of the University's total carbon emissions[2]; however, the failure of the CELPR Policies Map to identify the site of the existing turbine and surrounding area as being suitable for wind energy limits the University's ability to further utilise on-site renewable energy, thus contradicting the statement at paragraph 13.2. Therefore, the Policy and Proposals Map are not enabling the realisation of the CELPR's ambitions.

2.2 Is Policy DM53 effective?

2.6 Policy DM53 (examination document ref. SD_02.1) is not effective (i.e. deliverable over the plan period) as it refers to two plans which are contradictory. The policy states that:

'Proposals for wind turbines will only be supported where they are located within an area identified as suitable for wind energy as shown on the Local Plan Policies Map and in Figure 13.1 (Areas identified as suitable for Wind Energy).'

2.7 However, Figure 13.1 does not align with the Policies Map and it is unclear which would take precedence. The policy is therefore currently ineffective in allowing the determination of wind turbine applications over the plan period and contrary to paragraph 16d of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

2.3 Is Policy DM53 consistent with national policy?

2.8 Paragraph 13.4 of the Plan (examination document ref. SD_02.1) references the Government's Energy White Paper (2020) and notes that the Government recognises that a low-cost net-zero energy system is likely to be composed

[2] Lancaster University Climate Emergency Carbon Reduction Plan

predominantly of wind and solar, describing onshore wind and solar as 'key building blocks of the future generation mix…' (Energy White Paper, 2020, page 45).

2.9 In relation to wind and solar energy generation, the Energy White Paper (2020) goes on to state:

'We will need sustained growth in the capacity of these sectors in the next decade to ensure that we are on a pathway that allows us to meet net zero emissions in all demand scenarios' (page 45).

2.10 As well as net zero carbon targets, the Government is committing to cleaner and more affordable energy to be made in Great Britain, in order to address issues of energy independence and security. The Government's British Energy Security Strategy (2022) states that following the recovery from the pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine, European gas prices have soared by more than 200% last year and coal prices increased by more than 100%. The long term solution is to address the country's dependence on imported oil and gas. Targets have been established within the Strategy that by 2030 95% of British electricity could be low-carbon and by 2035 the electricity system will be decarbonised.

2.11 The Energy Security Strategy focuses on renewable energy sources, including wind, and it is recognised in the Strategy that onshore wind is one of the cheapest forms of renewable power.

2.12 The Energy Security Strategy builds on the Government's Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener (2020), which established a key policy for the UK to be powered entirely by clean electricity by 2035, subject to security of supply.

2.13 The amended Policies Map (District) (examination document ref. P_01.1.1) is restrictive in where it identifies areas as being suitable for wind energy. This restriction contradicts and is therefore not consistent with national policy, which recognises the importance of wind energy in supporting the advance to net zero.

2.14 The CELPR will establish the planning policy for the authority until 2031. If the Policies Map (examination document ref. P_01.1.1) is not updated to reflect Figure 13.1, this will limit the ability for wind turbines to be developed in parts of the authority over the next nine years, which is a crucial timeframe given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration to be net zero by 2030 and the UK Government's stated intentions to reach net zero by 2050, reducing emissions by 78% by 2035 as an interim measure[3].

2.15 In summary, the proposed Policies Map (District) (examination document ref. P_01.1.1), and therefore Policy DM53 of the CELPR, are not consistent with national policy as the Plan would create an overly restrictive planning policy framework that would hamper the ability to meet national policy requirements regarding reducing emissions and achieving net zero status.

[3] UK Government sixth Carbon Budget, 2021

3.0 Matter 3, Issue 1, Question 3.13

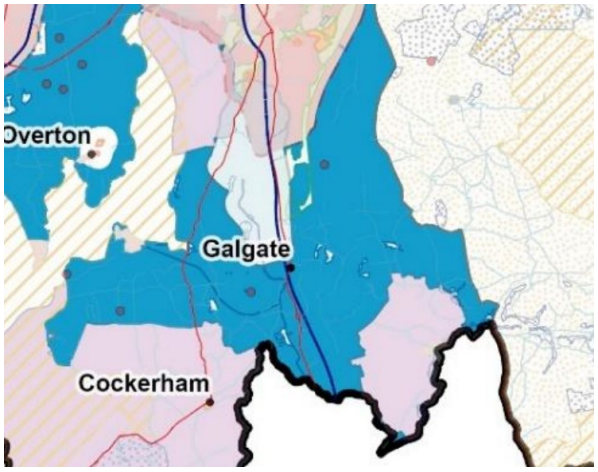
3.1 This section relates to Matter 3, Question 3.13: *What is Figure 13.1? Does it represent opportunities or constraints for wind energy? Are these opportunities and constraints adequately replicated on the Policies Map?*

3.1 Evidence Base & Policies Maps

3.2 Figure 13.1 of the Development Management DPD (examination document ref. SD_02.1) shows areas identified as being suitable for wind energy development in blue. The areas shown as blue are those that are not covered by a designation or constraint (para. 13.16).

3.3 Within Figure 13.1, 'Wind Energy Opportunity Area Map' (extract below at Figure 3.1), the area of land to the east of the M6 which is within the University's ownership, known as 'Forrest Hills', is identified in blue, alongside the Bailrigg campus itself.

Figure 3.1: Extract of 'Wind Energy Opportunity Area Map', page 152 of examination document ref. SD_02.1

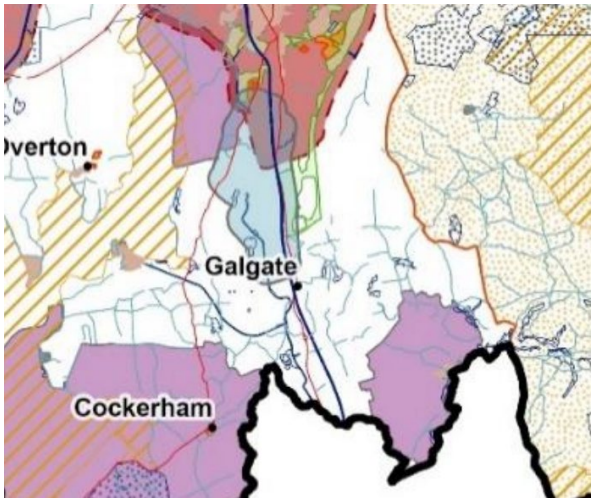


Source: Development Management DPD (examination document ref. SD_02.1), March 2022, Lancaster City Council

3.4 As shown on Figure 3.1, there is a circle within the blue area, to the north east of Galgate, which is the University's existing wind turbine.

3.5 Figure 3.2 below is an extract of the 'Wind Energy Constraints Map' provided on page 153 of examination document ref. SD_02.1. Within this, the majority of the Forrest Hills area is shown as white, i.e. not constrained.

Figure 3.2: Extract of 'Wind Energy Constraints Map', page 153 of examination document ref. SD_02.1

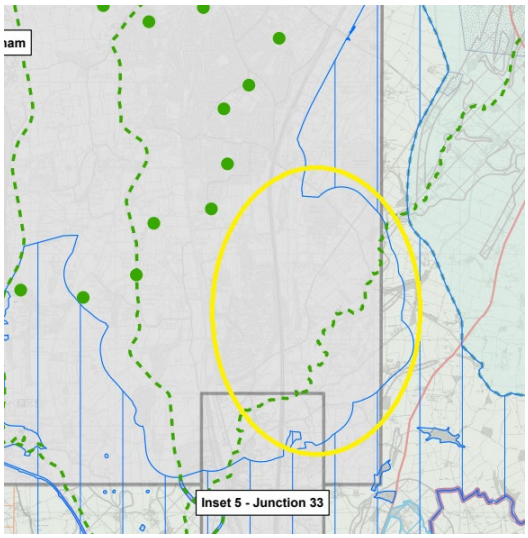


Source: Development Management DPD (examination document ref. SD_02.1), March 2022, Lancaster City Council

3.6 According to para. 13.16 of examination document ref. SD_02.1, by being located within a blue area and not covered by a designation or constraint, an area is identified as suitable for wind energy. On this basis, the University's estate is suitable for wind energy.

3.7 However, this is not replicated on the CELPR Policies Map. Within the CELPR Policies Map (District) (examination document ref. P_01.1.1) this land is not identified as being within an 'Area Suitable for Wind Energy'. The approximate location of the area which should be identified as suitable for wind energy (in accordance with Figure 13.1 of the DPD), but which is currently not identified as such on examination document ref. P_01.1.1 is indicated below in Figure 3.3 by a yellow circle.

Figure 3.3 Extract of amended Policies Map (District) (examination document ref. P_01.1.1) with yellow circle added to demonstrate area missing from land identified as Suitable for Wind Energy

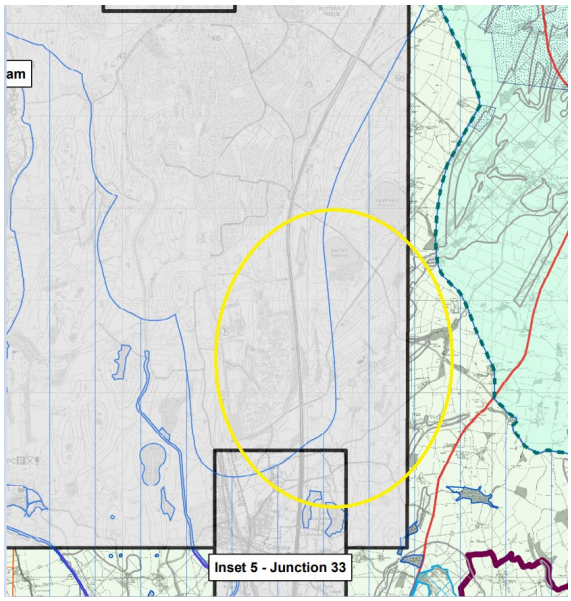


Source: Amended Strategic Policies and Land Allocations Policies Map (District) (examination document ref. P_01.1.1), January 2022, Lancaster City Council – yellow circle added by CBRE Limited.

3.8 The extent of the area suitable for wind energy in the CELPR Policies Map (District) (examination document ref. P_01.1.1) is in fact more restrictive than the area shown as being suitable in the currently adopted Policies Map (District) (2020). A comparison with the adopted Policies Map is included below at Figure 3.4, again with a yellow circle added for reference to the area in question.

3.9 Figure 3.4 shows that the eastern half of the yellow circle is already identified as an area suitable for wind energy in the adopted Policies Map.

Figure 3.4 Extract of adopted Policies Map (District) with yellow circle added to show similar area to that depicted in Figure 3.3



Source: Adopted Policies Map (District), 2020, Lancaster City Council – yellow circle added by CBRE Limited.

3.10 The University is of the view that the amended Policies Map associated with the CELPR should not be *more* restrictive in terms of identifying locations for wind energy than the current Local Plan, particularly in light of the purpose of the CELPR in achieving net zero status and tackling the climate crisis. The University considers that the area identified as suitable for wind energy should in fact be extended via the CELPR to include more land than is currently shown on the adopted Policies Map, to reflect the blue areas shown in Figure 13.1 of examination document ref. SD_02.1, incorporating land to the west of Hazelrigg Lane.

3.11 There is no evidence submitted with the CELPR which would explain or justify why Figure 13.1 is not replicated in the amended CELPR Policies Map (District) (examination document ref. P_01.1.1).

3.2 Suitability of Lancaster University land for wind energy

3.12 The area identified in Figure 3.3 by the yellow circle should be added to the CELPR Policies Map (District) (examination document ref. P_01.1.1) as part of the identified Area Suitable for Wind Energy. Not only would this result in alignment between Figure 13.1 and the Policies Map, but it would also reflect that this area is, in fact, suitable for wind energy.

3.13 As referenced in earlier representations, one of the key factors which demonstrates the suitability of this area for wind energy is the presence of the University's existing wind turbine within this area. The acceptability of this turbine (as demonstrated by the existing turbine gaining planning permission) coupled with the success of

the turbine, as detailed in the Introduction to this Hearing Statement, demonstrate that this area is suitable for wind energy.

3.14 The Officer's Report for the operational wind turbine off Hazelrigg Lane (permission reference 10/01061/FUL) noted the comments received from Lancashire County Council's Landscape Officer. Although raising some significant concerns with the development, the comments also contained the following summary:

'The development would not have a major impact on the setting and character of the AONB primarily due to the small scale of the development in relation to the size of the AONB and the mitigation effects of the separation distance between them.' (Table at 4.1 of Officer Report).

3.15 In addition, the AONB Committee did not respond to the application with the Officer summarising their previous comments that '*...solely from the basis of AONB purposes alone i.e. 'conservation and enhancement of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty' they did not feel there were sufficient grounds to object to the proposal*' (Table at 4.1 of Officer Report).

3.16 In summarising the landscape and visual impacts of the proposed development, the Case Officer concluded that: *'On balance the landscape and visual impacts identified would be outweighed by the long-term environmental benefits of the proposal'* (para. 7.33 of the Committee Report).

3.17 In addition to landscape and visual impact, the other main issue that was weighed in the planning balance was residential amenity, in terms of visual impact, shadow flicker, noise and TV interference. The Officer concluded that noise and shadow flicker could be adequately mitigated and the visual impact from nearby residential properties was partial or obscured. The potential for adverse impacts was recognised and discussed in detail; however, the adverse impacts were not considered of sufficient magnitude to outweigh the benefits of the proposal and warrant a refusal of planning permission: '*...on balance, the benefits of the proposed turbine would outweigh both landscape and residential amenity concerns*' (para. 8.7).

3.18 This Committee Report, alongside the decision to approve the application, supports Figure 13.1 in identifying the Forrest Hills area as suitable for wind energy, and this should be reflected in the updated CELPR Policies Map (District).

4.0 Conclusion

4.1 In summary, as drafted we do not consider that Policy DM53 is justified, effective or consistent with national policy.

4.2 In order to address the University's concerns, the amended CELPR Policies Map (District) (examination document ref. P_01.1.1) needs to be updated to expand the areas identified as being suitable for wind energy, in order to accurately reflect the Council's evidence base, in the form of Figure 13.1 of examination document ref. SD_02.1.

4.3 The Policies Map needs to be amended to depict the areas shown in blue in Figure 13.1, thus allocating them as areas suitable for wind energy.

4.4 The University would like to take this opportunity to reiterate the importance of wind energy for its sustainability strategy and, as discussed in previous representations, the University's future aspirations include a second wind turbine. It is important that the CELPR is fully supportive of this, as well as other forms of renewable energy generation where appropriate, in order to meet carbon reduction targets as early as possible.

4.5 Updating the Policies Map would ensure that the Policy is sound and this will assist in the plan progressing to adoption as soon as possible.