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Halton-with-Aughton Neighbourhood
Development Plan

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Dear Mr Collinson

Halton-with-Aughton Neighbourhood Development Plan Examination

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the issues you have raised with regard to policy HA-5 Flooding. This letter is a joint response from Lancaster City Council and Halton-with-Aughton Parish Council.

The Planning Practice Guidance, which has equal status as national planning policy to the Framework (Mead Realisations Ltd v Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government [2025] EWCA 32) states that, 'all Plans should make as much use as possible of opportunities presented by new development to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding' (Paragraph: 062 Reference ID: 7-062-20220825). This is not merely a requirement to ensure development does not increase flooding but an expectation that plans and development will reduce the causes and impacts of existing flood risk on and off site. Paragraph: 066 Reference ID: 7-066-20220825 states, 'Land that is likely to be needed for natural flood management could also be protected by safeguarding land for future flood risk management infrastructure'. There is no mention within this part of national policy that this relates only to residual flood risk. Policy HA-5 proposes to ensure that the areas identified are safeguarded and developed to provide natural flood mitigation measures that contribute to reducing the causes and impacts of significant flood risk within Halton. To accord with national policy, it is not enough that new development simply does not make flood risk elsewhere worse, it should contribute to reducing it. The areas identified by the Study provide an opportunity to include natural flood risk measures within development to reduce the causes and impact of flooding as expected by national policy. While the Study does acknowledge that the lack of landowner support may be an obstacle, this does not mean that such opportunities should be ignored where a development is proposed. Development in these areas should be designed to ensure that the areas identified are used for natural flood risk measures and contribute to reducing the causes and impacts of flooding on and off the site.

The WMS of 2015 relating to technical standards is dated and no longer reflects national planning policy which has evolved significantly since then. For example, many plans, including Lancaster Local Plan include technical standards for energy efficiency beyond the Code 4 referred to in the WMS. Policy DM34 of the Lancaster Local Plan also includes technical standards for sustainable drainage systems. The 'new system' referred to relates to optional water, dwelling size, accessibility and energy efficiency standards. It does not relate to wider flood risk matters. The Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance expect plans to ensure that opportunities are taken to reduce flood risk. It is therefore appropriate for the Neighbourhood Plan to include policies which set out expectations for flood risk and drainage, especially where flood risk is identified as a significant issue in an area.

We therefore request that you review your stance regarding the safeguarding of the areas of land identified within the Study. It is acknowledged that the wording of the policy relating to the safeguarded areas could be improved. Amending the wording to ensure that these areas are either safeguarded for potential future flood risk measures or if they are incorporated within an application site, the areas are designed to accommodate natural flood risk measures that reduce the causes and impacts of flood risk on and off site would ensure that they are not lost as opportunities to reduce flood risk in accordance with national policy.

The bullet points within the recommended modified policy are consistent with the NPPF, PPG and policies DM33 and DM34 of the Local Plan which seek to reduce the causes and impacts of flood risk. They are however equally relevant to all new development, not just within the area identified in 'Plan 12'. We request the recommended modification is altered so that the revised policy relates to the whole of the Neighbourhood Plan area.

If, despite the above, you remain of the opinion that policy HA-5 cannot safeguard the land for flood mitigation and/or the bullet points in your report should not relate to all development, please would you consider making the following amendments to the recommended modified policy:

- Number the bullet points for ease of reference;
- Add reference to the Jacobs report after 'evidence of flood risk in Halton Village '

Your reconsideration of the inclusion of safeguarding land for flood mitigation would be appreciated. We look forward either further correspondence with regard a revised modified policy or your report in due course.

Yours sincerely



Fiona Clark
Planning Officer (Homes and Communities)



Luke Mills
Clerk to Halton-with-Aughton Parish Council